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ABSTRACT

This document chronicles the 25 year history of La Guardia Community College. Chapter 1, "A Sign of Its Times," describes the beginnings of La Guardia Community College, including the first buildings, departments, faculty, and staff members. At a time before the concepts of multiculturalism and diversity entered the mainstream, about one-third of the college's faculty were women and one-forth were people of color. Chapter Two, "Orientation," describes the first students and highlights their accomplishments. La Guardia's first freshman class consisted of 537 students, of whom 312 were women and 225 were men. An internal report noted that the ethnic distribution was not highly diversified, which spurred the creation of multicultural programs and efforts in the coming years. The second chapter also discusses the development of La Guardia's student services, and student clubs and organizations. Chapter 3, "Growing Pains," describes the budget cuts, political dissatisfaction, increased societal demands, and other critical issues that affected the daily lives of all members of the college's community. Chapters 4 and 5, "Maturity" and "New Beginnings," highlight the many accomplishments of the college. They describe La Guardia's increased services to a broader and more diversified community, and individuals within the college's community who have distinguished themselves by making major contributions to the quality of life. This document concludes with "The Road Ahead," projections for the future of the college. (TGO)

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THE FIRST TWENTY-FIVE YEARS

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LaGuardia Community College: The First 25 Years

By
Terry Golway

No.9

CHAPTER ONE

A Sign of Its Times

In the beginning there was only a number, and the number was nine.

On January 22, 1968, a dreary mid-winter's afternoon, members of the Board of Higher Education gathered for a routine session in the board's meeting room on East 80th Street. There were several items on the agenda, most of them of the housekeeping variety. One bit of business, however, promised to be far from routine, for it eventually would affect the lives of thousands of young people, give birth to dozens of educational innovations and become a focal point in the revival of a neighborhood. After running through the usual agenda, Board members passed a resolution establishing something called Community College Number Nine. In this anonymous fashion the institution that became LaGuardia Community College was born.

The 1960s had witnessed the greatest expansion of publicly funded higher education in New York's history. The decade saw the birth of several new senior colleges (John Jay, Richmond, York and—in 1970—Medgar Evers) as well as three new community colleges (Kingsborough, Borough of Manhattan and Hostos). In addition, Lehman College had been split off from Hunter College and Baruch from City College. Community College Number Nine was to be the newest, but by no means the last, part of City University's plan to respond to and grow with a changing New York City. After Community College Number Nine would come, naturally, Community College Number Ten. Such were the expectations of a heady era.

President Joseph Shenker and Vice President Martin Moed devising course schedules in LaGuardia's early years.

While January 22, 1968, may be regarded as the moment of LaGuardia Community College's conception, the ideas and philosophy that would become the school's hallmarks had been a part of New York for well over a century. City University itself has its roots in the establishment of an extraordinary and far-sighted experiment in education known as the Free Academy, founded in the city in 1849 to provide free higher education to graduates of New York's public schools (or common schools, as they were called at the time). The Free Academy was founded to allow "the children of the rich and the poor [to] take their seats together and know of no distinction save that of industry, good conduct and intellect." The day the Free Academy opened its doors for the first time, its president, Horace Webster, said:

> The experiment is to be tried whether the highest education can be given to the masses; whether the children of the people, the children of the whole people, can be educated; and whether an institution of learning of the highest grade can be successfully controlled by the popular will, not by the privileged few, but by the privileged many.

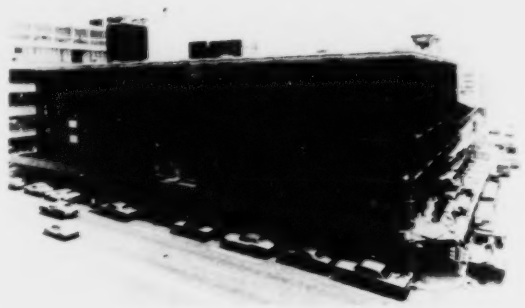
When the Board of Higher Education approved the establishment of Community College Number Nine, its members knew that "learning of the highest grade" was about to be opened to the "privileged many" in a way Horace Webster might not have envisioned in antebellum New York. City University was preparing to implement yet another experiment in higher education—open admissions, the guarantee that any graduate of the city's public schools would have a place in higher education. Those graduates indeed would be children "of the whole people," for they would come from households and families of the New York that was emerging in the late 1960s, a New York that was becoming more diverse than at any other time in its history. The nation kept a close eye on New York's experiment in higher education for the masses. *Time* magazine noted that City University's "switch from elitism to egalitarianism represents the academic world's most radical response... to explosive changes in the nation's cities.... C.U.N.Y. and other urban universities confront rising pressure from poor youths, often members of minority groups, who yearn for the college degrees that they look upon as a ticket to U.S. affluence and status."

Martin Moed was among the founders of the college and later served as its acting president.

Concepts such as ethnic and racial pluralism were unheard of at the time, but City University and the Board of Higher Education understood the idea, even if it lacked a name. The Board's master plan in 1972 noted that while the non-white percentage of the city's population grew from 9 percent to 14 percent from 1950 to 1960, City University's percentage of non-white students remained stagnant at 5 percent. During the 1960s, New York would lose nearly a million whites, and they would be replaced by more than three-quarters of a million

African Americans, Latinos and other groups. If City University were to be true to the mandate of Horace Webster, it would have to reflect this emerging, new New York.

Not only was the city's demographic and cultural landscape changing, but likewise its economy. City University—many a poor family's port of entry into the middle class—understood that it would have a key role in determining whether, and how, New York's work force adapted to new economic realities. As Community College Number Nine reached the drawing board, the city already had witnessed a sharp decline in manufacturing jobs, a longtime staple of its economy. The trend would continue in the next quarter-century. And the composition of the work force itself was changing, too. Well before the rest of the nation noticed, City University realized that a gender revolution was about to take place. "There are signs that the traditional division of labor along sexual lines will undergo change," a University report noted in the early 1970s.



It all started here: LaGuardia's original building, as seen in the early 1970s.

Somebody was going to have to provide the new New York with an educated, well-trained work force drawn from families and groups that higher education traditionally overlooked. In another age, under other leaders, such a prospect might have seemed daunting, and perhaps even hopeless. The 1960s, however, recognized neither limits nor obstacles.

City University chose to take the Free Academy's founding principle to its ultimate expression. Open admissions was intended to be the vehicle by which City University would respond to the changes in the city and in society. There would be a place in the University for any New York City public school graduate with a dream, regardless of socioeconomic class or racial background or cultural tradition. Cost was not a matter for discussion. Tuition, in the century-old tradition, was free, and the taxpayers considered such generosity to be part of what made New York a great city.

Open admissions meant there would be greater demand for seats in the University, and the need for more community colleges was discussed as early as 1964, in the midst of the University's bold expansion. Community College Number Nine would be the fourth of five new community colleges built with the demands of open admissions in mind. The University anticipated that open admissions would require the number of community college seats to increase from 22,000 in 1970 to 51,970 five years later.

The new college, according to a proposal drafted for the Board of Higher Education, was to be "comprehensive ... in terms of its variety of program offerings and its community service mission. Students will be able to choose among courses of study leading to the A.A.S. degree and immediate employment, or those

leading to the A.A. or A.S. degree which will guarantee automatic transfer to a four-year baccalaureate program within City University. The college will be oriented to the needs and interests of the community in which it is located, providing cultural activities, special services, continuing education and skills training opportunities for community residents of all ages."

Ann Marcus receives an award in 1976 for her work as dean of continuing education.

With this broad mission statement in mind, the Office of the Dean for Community College Affairs began the work of converting a bureaucratic resolution into the brick and mortar of reality. Taking charge of the task was the Dean for Community College Affairs himself, Dr. Joseph Shenker, already a top-level City University administrator while in his mid-20s. Shenker was precociously well-connected and enjoyed a close relationship with City University Chancellor Albert Bowker. His quick rise to the highest levels of City University's leadership would serve him well in later years, for he understood how the system—whether from the academic or the political side—worked.

In its earliest days of gestation, Community College Number Nine consisted of a file cabinet in a room at the Board of Higher Education's headquarters, where planning was underway. "That's how I got my first look at the college," recalled Dr. Martin Moed, who was City University's associate dean for occupational programs at the time. "The college was a file cabinet with one file in it, and it was labeled 'Community College Number Nine.'"

Early on, when the college consisted of little more than dreams written on paper, the University's planners (primarily Bowker and Shenker) decided that Community College Number Nine's signature program would be cooperative education. Each of the new community colleges would specialize in a given theme, and co-op was to be Community College Number Nine's. "The idea came from Joe Shenker," said Dr. Harry Heinemann, LaGuardia's Dean of Cooperative Education. Co-op, Heinemann said, would serve as a way to encourage the sons and daughters of working-class parents to consider extending their education while also receiving real, on-the-job training for careers. The program would establish a link between school and work, allaying the fears of struggling parents who were skeptical of the need for higher education.

Mary Ryan was the college's first personnel and labor relations director.

Thomas Triviano, a member of LaGuardia's first graduating class, knew that college was in his future while he was attending Monsignor McClancy High School, near his family's home in Maspeth. Unlike some of his future classmates, his father had gone to college, so he was not a family trailblazer. Even so, he "had no direction," he said. "I wasn't certain about what I wanted to do." He won admission to several private colleges, and his family could have afforded the tuition, but he decided to attend LaGuardia because of co-op. "It offered the experience to go out into the work force and give you exposure to that part of life," he said. "That's what fascinated me about LaGuardia. I thought it would give me

an opportunity to find out something about myself."

Generally speaking, the concept of co-op was not new, but no other two-year college in the country had such a program, and no other institution of higher education offered co-op for credit. The new college would require three for-credit internships, and would fold the co-op concept into every facet of academic life. From the beginning, then, this as-yet nameless college was staking out a new path, regardless of the briars and brambles underfoot. The rewards of exploration were well worth the risk (and possible pain) of a missed step.

In the midst of the preliminary planning, Shenker was named Acting President of Kingsborough Community College. The appointment took effect on Sept. 8, 1969. The Board noted at the time, however, that Shenker would not be a candidate for permanent president of Kingsborough. Indeed, he served in Brooklyn just seven months, and on April 29, 1970, Acting President Shenker of Kingsborough became President Shenker of Community College Number Nine. When he was serving as Dean for Community College Affairs, Shenker had been the chief architect of the school's still-unfolding plans. Now, he would make those plans reality.

At the same time, the new president was presented with a new building, that is to say, an old building that would serve as his new place of business. The Board of Higher Education passed a resolution approving the purchase of a 50-year-old, five-story Ford Instrument Company factory building on Thomson Avenue in Long Island City to house the new college. The facility had been remodeled in 1940 and soon afterwards was turned over to the production of material for the U.S. armed services in World War II. The Board's resolution noted, apparently without irony, that the building was suited to its new purposes because it "could be readily adapted to college use and in fact it would appear that the college could make immediate use of certain areas within the building, thereby obviating the need to rent 'start-up' space elsewhere."

Presumably the facilities judged to be ready-made for college use did not include the acid vat that was rumored to lurk below the building's first floor.

In any case, the fledgling college now had a president, a location and a building. All it lacked was a name. That issue was resolved in October 1970, when the Board of Higher Education approved a resolution to the effect that:

> "... in proud recognition of Fiorello H. LaGuardia's lifelong public service to the people of the City of New York and of the United States, and his ambitious and successful leadership of good government campaigns to provide decent living conditions and guarantee democratic processes for all, the Board of Higher Education names Community College Number Nine Fiorello H. LaGuardia Community College."

With his short, stocky frame, exuberance, charisma and sense of social justice, Fiorello LaGuardia had been, and remained, one of New York's best-loved politicians. His reputation had survived the passing of the decades, so much so that every successful Mayor since he left office in 1945 aspired to be thought of as the "next LaGuardia." He exuded New York attitude, and took it first to Washington, where he was a successful Republican congressman who spoke for reform as well as for a more-responsive, more-caring government. After a short career in Congress, he was elected Mayor in 1933 in the midst of the Great Depression. During his three terms, LaGuardia was a champion of ordinary people, thoroughly engaged in the business of improving people's lives and softening the free-market's blows. Even with a severely wounded city treasury, LaGuardia set out to build bridges, tunnels, schools, hospitals and parks. He unified the city's mass transit system, built the city's first public housing units in an effort to dramatically improve the lives of the city's poor, and provided impoverished artists with government funds. He has gone down in 20th Century New York history as the city's foremost champion of the poor and disenfranchised.

Harry Heinemann presided over the development of LaGuardia's signature program, cooperative education.

As a role model for a new college with a mission to bring higher education and opportunity to those society traditionally had passed by, Fiorello LaGuardia was a poetic choice. It also was one that required some political maneuvering and quiet persuasion. Community colleges traditionally were named for a geographic location, not for people. Administrators discussed naming the school Metropolitan Community College or Triborough Community College, but finally decided to break precedent and tradition by naming the school after LaGuardia. The state gave its approval, as did members of the LaGuardia family.

The choice of Long Island City as the college's home had a certain poetry, too. Few communities in New York have a better view of midtown Manhattan, one of the huge economic engines that had propelled the city to its position as the globe's financial capital. For several generations of New Yorkers, the soaring skyscrapers of Manhattan represented the dreams of economic opportunity and material advancement. A school founded on the principle of cooperative education could hardly have presented ambitious students with a more tempting view of the world to which so many aspired.

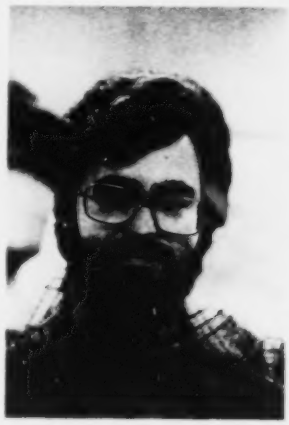
Roy McLeod was the first chair of the Mathematics Department and helped mentor young faculty members.

There were other reasons, more prosaic but equally important, for selecting Long Island City. A report to the Board of Higher Education noted that the neighborhood, which for years served as a warehouse for the disappearing, industry-based local economy, was in desperate need of economic revitalization. The neighborhood had been named in government studies as one of 11 pockets of poverty in New York. Residents on average earned $6,112 a year in 1960, 15 percent below the median income of Queens.

Most of the neighborhood's jobs were on their way elsewhere, to the South or

abroad, and the warehouses that served as storage for Manhattan's great retail outlets—Macy's, Gimbels and others—were outliving their usefulness. Long Island City's economy seemed as outdated as the freight train that made its way, in all its ponderous but faded glory, along a surface rail line located behind the old Ford building.

The region from which the new college figured to draw most of its students—the neighborhoods of western Queens—surely fit the definition of underserved and excluded. There were no higher education facilities in western Queens, and many of the area's high school students came from families that had never sent one of their own on to higher education. A report on the neighborhood presented to the Board of Higher Education noted that families in the vicinity were "not oriented toward college."



Gil Muller helped to establish the Division of Language and Culture.

Another report noted that the college's early attempts at establishing positive relationships with the western Queens community were frustrating. "Local leaders tended to accord the College a lukewarm reception, for reasons they readily expressed: LaGuardia's prospective constituents were largely blue-collar families...with average family incomes under $8,000, and they were struggling for economic survival," the report said. The children of such families, the report noted, "were expected to contribute substantially to the resources of the household.... A college education might be a luxury for some time in the future; in the present, their children needed jobs, not more schooling." Combining jobs and schooling in the form of co-op, of course, clearly was a selling point for such families.

Whatever the obstacles, the planners moved forward. Slowly, the new president began assembling a small planning team that met in a rented office adjacent to the Board of Higher Education's offices. Among those early planners were Ann Marcus, Sheila Gordon, Martin Moed and Mary Ryan. Freeman Sleeper was brought on as dean of faculty. Eventually, the small group of planners grew as administrators and faculty were brought on. Harry Heinemann was hired to supervise the all-important co-op program. Irving Goldberg was hired as dean of administration. Janet Lieberman was hired to develop a communication skills curriculum.

The late George Groman was the first chair of the Division of Language and Culture and was a much-loved mentor to a generation of English professors at the college.

In the frenzy of planning a new institution, even individual decisions seemed to be made on a seat-of-the-pants intuition. Almost as an after thought, a young dean at Cleveland State University named Dr. Raymond Bowen took a plane east at the invitation of Freeman Sleeper, who was recruiting administrators and faculty for the new school. Bowen was well-situated at Cleveland State and was not particularly eager to change positions, uproot his family and sell the house he and his wife had just bought in the Cleveland vicinity. "But I told my wife that this was a way to get a free trip to the East Coast," he said. He told his wife he'd "just go for the interview." He met with Shenker and other LaGuardia founders at their offices on East 80th Street, and then

ventured out to the factory in Long Island City. "There was oil all over the floor," he recalled. It was hardly inviting. Still, he was impressed with the spirit and enthusiasm. "It stimulated me. And walking around the city, with the restaurants and theaters, it wasn't like Cleveland," he said. Finally, almost despite himself, he accepted Shenker's offer to become associate dean of faculty. "But when I got on the plane, I realized I had made a commitment," he said. "When I got home, I waited a week before I had the courage to tell my wife."

The small core that would become the school's founders soon moved their base of operations from 80th Street to Thomson Avenue, and when the work day ended in the old factory, administrators and staff continued their deliberations at Brook's restaurant in Courthouse Square. There, decisions were made and plans hatched over saloon food and the occasional libation.

With the college preparing for a September, 1971, opening, prospective faculty members were being interviewed in the primitive space—the word "office" would imply far too much dignity to conditions—carved out amid the industrial debris. If the working atmosphere offended some of the would-be faculty members, accustomed as many were to the bucolic splendor of traditional universities, the spirit of the place soon eased their doubts. Dr. Roy McLeod, a mathematics professor who came to the new school from Nassau Community College, noted that the absence of offices for faculty was strange. "But soon, you got caught up in the excitement and didn't worry about it. If you had a desk and a chair, that was foremost," he said. When Dr. Gilbert Muller, an English professor, traveled to New York from Berkeley, California, for a Modern Language Association Convention, he arranged an interview with George Groman, chair of the Division of Language and Culture. He found himself being asked questions that sounded like a dream come true. "If you could create any course in the world, what would it be?" Dr. Groman asked.

John Cato chaired the Division of Social Science.

The query caught Muller off guard, for he was prepared for the traditional discussions of Faulkner, Chaucer and Shakespeare. After a moment's thought, he suggested a course in the social currents of American literature, taking into account political and cultural trends. His second suggestion was a course on the literature of the city. Both would become early course offerings at LaGuardia — a clear sign that faculty would be permitted to build academic programs from the grass roots.

He got the job, even managing to survive a faux pas during an interview with Shenker. The exile from the West Coast made the mistake of asking the President if he were related to Albert Shanker, the controversial and famous head of the New York teachers' union.

The scholars and administrators who were given the rare task of building and designing a college from scratch hailed from diverse backgrounds and experiences, which was hardly an accident. Shenker

and the team he built were intent on creating a faculty and staff that reflected the school's broad commitment to serving all communities and groups. Whatever their differences, however, the faculty had, for the most part, one characteristic in common: They were young, almost ostentatiously so. "Collectively, we were pretty inexperienced people," Dr. Marcus, currently the dean of the School of Education at New York University, recalled. "That was the good thing about the late 1960s. People were open to new ideas, and there was a sense of confidence. If you were a bright young person, you were given a lot of responsibilities."

Professor Michael Hoban of the Mathematics Department was the first chair of the Division of Natural Environment.

The core of people that would become LaGuardia's founders continued to grow during the planning year that preceded the college's opening. The spirit of the 1960s helped in recruitment, for the legacy of idealism continued to flourish even if the decade itself had concluded. "There was a cultural threshold," said Dr. George Hamada, who was hired as a science professor and later served as department chairman and provost. "Coming out of the 1960s, there was a sense of more power to the people." That, he said, was the "social environment of the time." LaGuardia, then, "attracted administrators and faculty who believed in power to the people. The old system didn't provide access to outsiders." So scholars who had the credentials and the opportunities to teach at some of the nation's most famous universities found themselves working instead in an old factory building in Long Island City with the intent of bringing something special to a new and underserved population.

As more faculty were added, the college's founders embarked on an innovative approach to organization that Shenker would later acknowledge to be utopian. Rather than build a traditional departmental structure, the young administrators decided on group courses together in four divisions: Language and Culture, chaired by Dr. George Groman; Social Sciences, chaired by Dr. John Cato; Natural Environment, chaired by Dr. Michael Hoban, and Business Education, chaired by Rose Palmer. First-year students would be able to take advantage of interdisciplinary core programs that drew on all four divisions, allowing faculty members to experiment with programs and courses while students were exposed to a broad range of fields of study before committing themselves to a major or a career path. In addition, an urban core curriculum was developed to emphasize the college's setting. The program consisted of three courses designed to give students a sense of the urban environment they shared with the college.

Rose Palmer, the first chair of the Business Division, put together a team that made the Division one of the college's strongest areas.

To assist in the scheduling of each student's three co-op internships, the administration settled on a unique quarter-system calendar, dividing the academic year into four, 13-week parts. Such a system, it was thought, would better lend itself to the school's rigorous work requirements.

Another innovation was a series of week-long, six hour-a-

day classes conducted at the beginning of each quarter. Called intensives, these classes immersed students in a variety of topics that often crossed disciplines and fields of study. "By breaking with a uniform pattern of learning, (intensives) permit and encourage a student to explore different ways of analyzing and comprehending material which may already be familiar," LaGuardia's first course bulletin explained. "They encourage multi-disciplinary approaches ... (and) will create a distinctive educational atmosphere for the entire College." Given the huge blocks of time they demanded, intensives were to be a challenge to faculty and students alike. Professors found that intensives lent themselves to field trips, which would lead to many memorable experiences for the school's mostly city-bred students. Sarah Barber, a professor in the Division of Language and Culture, brought students to the Catskill Mountains for a week of experiencing, and reading about, nature and the environment—a collaboration between literature and science. Closer to home, other students enrolled in an intensive team-taught by Gil Muller and Dr. Judy Gomez, a sociologist, which took them to the five boroughs in search of utopian societies.

Dorrie Williams brought expertise from the private sector and helped arrange for some of LaGuardia's first co-op internships.

Another critical facet of LaGuardia's mission was made plain during the intense, pre-opening preparations. Community outreach and continuing education, programs that would grow to become vital to both the school and the neighborhood, received a great deal of attention from the founders. The first of what would become scores of special programs based on community needs was an Education Associate Degree program, designed to enhance the careers of paraprofessionals in the city Board of Education. Eventually, the school's key link to the community, the Office of Grants and Continuing Education, was upgraded to divisional status as the Division of Continuing Education and Extension Services and would prove to be one of the college's biggest successes.

Fern Khan was director of the Education Associates program during LaGuardia's first year. She later served the college in a number of capacities.

The combination of innovative instruction, creative curricula, sensitivity to the wider world the college inhabited, and community outreach was a distinguishing characteristic of LaGuardia before the first student was enrolled. The challenge to the founders and those who would come later, of course, would be to keep that spirit alive.

The planning process was not without its bumps. Ann Marcus, who helped plan the college's adult education component, pointed out that while there was a great deal to be said about youthful enthusiasm, the lack of grey hair and crow's feet among the LaGuardia's founders led to some difficulties. "We had not been faculty ourselves, so we were hiring people to do something we ourselves didn't know how to do," she said. If the college's top leaders had been more experienced, she added, they would have been more cautious.

Caution, however, was a word not heard much on Thomson Avenue. Then again, it was hard to hear anything above the din of the workers who were assiduously laboring to get at least 70,000 square feet of the building's total of 230,000 in shape for Opening Day. Nothing in the limited experience of the young faculty that was assembling on

Thomson Avenue had prepared them for the conditions they faced as they frantically went about the business of designing curricula, getting to know their colleagues and learning about the students they soon would face. Dorrie Williams had just left IBM's staff development when he showed up at the Ford plant for a job interview. "I thought I had the wrong address," he said. "It was a warehouse with no windows. It looked like an abandoned building. I thought I made a mistake." He walked up a dusty stairwell to his appointment "in a state of shock." Nevertheless, he accepted the job of associate dean for co-op education when it was offered.

From its beginning, LaGuardia made a commitment to music and fine arts.

Amid the chaos and the excitement, LaGuardia's new faculty and staff, 49 strong, assembled for a month-long orientation session on August 2, just weeks before the school officially opened its doors. Actually, the doors already were open. A group of more than 100 paraprofessionals from the Board of Education began attending classes in the spring of '71 as part of the Education Associates program run by Fern Khan. The paraprofessionals tended to be older than traditional college students and many didn't believe they could handle the work required of them, even though some had done some college course work years before. "They were all extremely motivated, but they underestimated their talents and skills," Ms. Khan, now the dean for Continuing Education at Bank Street College of Education, recalled. To overcome the lack of confidence, Ms. Khan and a small staff sought to break down the mystery called higher education. "In a sociology class, for example, they didn't know the technical language, so if we were talking about social interaction, we explained that that was something they did all the time. What we did was break down the unfamiliar to make it familiar, and suddenly it was no great mystery."

A similar task awaited the rest of LaGuardia's faculty. Janet Lieberman had studied the composition of the prospective student body, and understood that many of LaGuardia's faculty "knew little of New York City high school students." She led the summer orientation seminar, sponsored by a training grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. It was designed to accomplish for faculty what similar sessions traditionally seek to do for new students: answer questions, shatter illusions and prepare for the coming year.

Tom French was the college's first history professor.

"There was an emphasis on identifying with students, to make it student-friendly," she said. There were many ways to accomplish that goal, and several already were being institutionalized. For example, the college's extended-day session would allow students to enroll in a limited number of courses at night, making the college accessible to students' needs and schedules.

Equally important to the forty faculty members was a sense that from the outset they could be innovative and engage in academic risk-taking. LaGuardia was to be a place where

experimentation, innovation and creativity were paramount. Inevitably there would be failures, but such was the price for original thinking. "We were told to be as innovative as we could be," said Roy McLeod.

Having so inculcated the earnest intellectual go-getters with the spirit of LaGuardia, Lieberman then put risk-taking into immediate operation. She arranged for faculty, in groups of two or three, to take helicopter rides over Long Island City and its environs on August 11. From the air, the new faculty members would view New York and its urban sociology in a decidedly untraditional way, and, from a decidedly unusual perspective, would get to see their students' environment. The experience also provided faculty with the sort of intense bonding that only mutually experienced anxiety can provide. For numerous members of the founding faculty—Dr. Tom French, Dr. Marvin Surkin, Professor Donald Davidson, Dr. John Hyland and others—the helicopter flights revealed to them the world below and the academic world they would have to create.

Marvin Surkin helped to plan the curriculum of the Division of Social Science.

Having gotten so vivid a glimpse of the big picture, the faculty and administrators got back to the details of curriculum and program development. There was no pretense that all would be finished by the time students arrived. This was going to be a work in progress, and there was no telling how it would turn out.

On September 22, 1971, President Shenker, his top administrators and faculty members assembled at the Thomson Avenue entrances to greet the new students as they crossed an important threshold. They were about to become college students, and an old building was about to become a college.

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The Co-op
College That's
10 Minutes From
Times Square
WE WORK
WITH THE
BEST!

CHAPTER TWO

Orientation

That there was no college in the nation quite like LaGuardia Community College was evident on Day 1. Where else, after all, were faculty members competing with jackhammers to make themselves heard? Where else was there anything like the new college's Great Hall, a huge room in the back of the former factory in which recreational activities, lectures and meetings were held, sometimes at the same time? Where else did the aroma of black cherry chewing gum from the nearby Chicle factory waft through campus windows? And where else were the president, administrators and faculty at the door, personally greeting each student?

LaGuardia's first freshman class consisted of 537 students, of whom 312 were women and 225 were men. Seventy-two percent of the class was white, 19 percent black, six percent were Puerto Rican, 0.8 percent Asian, 0.2 percent Native American and three percent were recorded as "other." Forty-four students were born in other countries. An internal report noted that the ethnic distribution was not "highly diversified" and that "new recruiting efforts" would be made to "attract more Black and Puerto Rican students." The college already had a strong track record in hiring people from diverse backgrounds: At a time long before the concepts of diversity and multiculturalism entered into the mainstream, about a third of the college's faculty were women, and about a quarter were members of American minority groups. Both numbers would increase in coming years.

As expected, most students were from low-income or lower-middle-income families from Queens. Most freshmen came from nearby public high schools such as Newtown, Bryant and Long Island City, but 116 came from the parochial schools of western Queens: Christ the King, Mater Christi and others. A majority of the students chose LaGuardia because of its its signature program, co-operative education.

The late Robert O'Pray taught secretarial science during LaGuardia's early years.

While LaGuardia's first freshman class was not as ethnically diverse as its founders wished, it nevertheless was very much a part of the socioeconomic constituency the school's eager young educators were looking to reach. Most students were from families with no tradition of higher education, and some of them already had tried other branches of City University but were unhappy with their experiences. They came to LaGuardia hoping to find answers to their often-complex questions. A study of the college's first class showed that "a surprising number (of students), particularly among the female students, are attending college despite strong resistance from their parents." The students' fathers tended to be foremen, truck drivers, laborers, civil servants and mechanics, while their mothers were factory workers, salespeople, secretaries and homemakers. At a time when critics of open admissions were suggesting that students from such backgrounds somehow were not deserving of a college education, City University's vice chancellor Timothy Healy saw something remarkable. These students, at LaGuardia and elsewhere at CUNY, were "the original American revolutionaries," he said. "They want a piece of the action."

In that first year, students wishing to claim their "piece of the action" had a choice of five programs in the Business Division: Business Administration, Accounting, Secretarial Science, Business Management and Data Processing. Students with other interests and talents could pursue a degree in Liberal Arts, and fully 35 percent of the initial class did so, making Liberal Arts another popular program.

Herman Washington (standing) and Don Davidson were early members of the Business Division.

At the outset, the Business Division had some of the college's strongest programs. Rose Palmer put together a team of instructors with strong backgrounds in business, not teaching. "My theory at the time was that I wanted people who were practitioners," Palmer recalled. "I knew enough about teaching, so I could handle that part of the program."

The team she put together created what Palmer called "the best business division in the city" despite the difficulty of having to compete with the business world itself. Among those who created such an exciting and innovative atmosphere was Professor Ron Miller, who taught accounting. Palmer described him as a "teaching virtuoso." Tragically, Miller later died of AIDS, as did another founding member of the business faculty, Dr. Bob O'Pray, who taught secretarial science.

The formula for the Division's success was simple, according to its founding chair. "We had people who were good

practitioners and good teachers," she said. "The programs at that point were pretty standard. They were being taught in every other community college. But it was the excellence of the faculty that made it all come alive." In addition to Miller and O'Pray, some of the faculty members in the early years were Don Davidson, Herman Washington, Avis Anderson, Jim Cernigliaro, Ted Demetriou and David Wertheimer.

Wertheimer recalled that he taught a little bit of everything in those early years, although his speciality was law. "There was a real collegial spirit in the division, and Rose Palmer was an inspiration to me, as was Ron Miller," he said.

Wertheimer later founded LaGuardia's Law Club, and named it in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who saved hundreds of Jews during the Holocaust. Club members of European descent often were assigned to write papers on King, while those of African, Asian or South American ancestry wrote papers on Wallenberg. "King and Wallenberg were very much the same in the sense that they reached out to people of other ethnic groups and built bridges in the name of humanity," Wertheimer said.

Jim Cernigliaro came from a Big Eight firm to help develop the accounting curriculum.

The energy and excitement of the Business Division attracted to LaGuardia students who were intent on improving themselves, intellectually as well as financially. Maxine Lance was among the students who chose data processing as a major. She hadn't thought much about attending college, but when so many of her high school friends said they were going to further their education, she decided to join them. At LaGuardia, she found a faculty and staff prepared to help her through this entirely new, and, in her case, unplanned experience. With assistance from several professors, she found her way through the inevitable trouble spots. "It was one on one," she said of the attention faculty members were able to give students. "If you had a problem with a class, you made an appointment, and they would tutor you."

Another young student was Rudy Washington, who lived in South Jamaica with his parents and six brothers and sisters. He made $35 a week working at Times Square Stores while majoring in business and psychology at LaGuardia. "LaGuardia was opportunity to me," he said. "It was new. It was based upon a vision of what CUNY could be." Active in clubs and president of the student government, Washington started a day care center as part of a class project that still exists. "I remember Professor Herman Washington who was in the computer science program and Professor Leo Newbold and Dean Jerrylyn Minter and Dean William Hamilton," Washington said. "They were people who rallied around me and helped me to really take life seriously." In the caption beneath his 1974 yearbook photo, he wrote that his career goal was to be mayor. Today Rudy Washington is the Deputy Mayor for Community Development, part of Mayor Rudolph Giuliani's management team.

Jerry Minter served as a dean in the Student Services Division.

A well-prepared support system was in place to assist those who

Dean Bill Hamilton was instrumental in developing a strong Student Services Division.

needed help with the transition from high school to higher education. With open admissions in place, LaGuardia, like every other branch of City University, received students with divergent needs and skills and with uneven preparation for the work that would be required of them. Few within CUNY held many illusions about the education many poor, inner-city students were receiving in the city's embattled public school system. (For example, more than 40 percent of LaGuardia's first class read below 10th-grade level.) A student-centered faculty, counseling and remediation would combine to serve as a critical bridges for ambitious students whose skills required improvement and encouragement. Remedial programs in particular were considered vital to the success of the open admissions experiment. Those who wished to attach a stigma to such programs had not yet made their complaints known, and the University's administrators generously supported remediation, understanding it to be the linchpin of open admissions and the promise of higher education to the underserved.

The Student Services Division offered counseling to prospective students even before LaGuardia opened its doors, and these counselors, along with other administrators and staff, continued to counsel and monitor students until graduation. Each student was assigned to a counseling team consisting of a classroom instructor, a counselor from Student Services and a coordinator from the Division of Cooperative Education. The teams met once a week with groups of 20 to 25 students. The counselors, including Winston Davidson, Rick Holmes, Leo Newball, LaVergne Trawick, Bob Durfey and Pia Andritsi, operating outside the teams, dealt individually with students "in short-term and crisis counseling of a personal, social or academic nature" and identified students in need of more help. It was this close attention to student needs, made possible by the school's intimate setting, that many founding faculty and students found immensely satisfying and enriching.

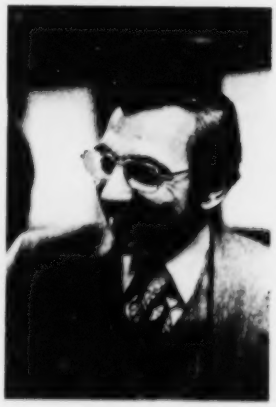
LaVergne Trawick was one of several faculty members hired to expand LaGuardia's counseling staff.

LaGuardia offered its original students remediation programs in mathematics and language through two carefully designed courses: Symbolic Communication 101 and Interpersonal Communication 101. The three-credit classes were required of those students who scored below certain levels in an exam called the California Achievement Test given to all incoming freshmen.

Symbolic Communication was an innovative mathematics course administered by the Division of Natural Environment. Roy McLeod, who would later become the first chairman of LaGuardia's Mathematics Department when the divisional system was scrapped, was one of the course's instructors, and he noted that the course's very name made it stand out from ordinary remedial mathematics classes. "People would ask what department you belonged to and when you said 'Division of Natural Environment,' they stared at you," McLeod recalled. "And then when you said that you were teaching math as symbolic communication, it threw them for a loop." The course combined, in McLeod's words, "a little art, nature and math that applied to real life. It had the

students thinking across disciplines." It was just one example of the sort of cross-pollination that LaGuardia would encourage and nurture through the years.

Interpersonal Communication, offered under the auspices of the Division of Language and Culture, was designed to assist students with writing and reading deficiencies. The importance of both remedial courses was clear: Of the school's first freshman class of 540, all but 97 were required to take Symbolic Communication and all but 120 were required to take Interpersonal Communication. Financial support from the university allowed the college to contemplate such a huge endeavor.



Ted Demetriou brought a successful corporate background to business instruction at the college.

Another important challenge awaiting the new students was, of course, cooperative education, the school's signature theme and its drawing card. In the weeks leading to Opening Day, LaGuardia's co-op staff spent long hours with private-sector leaders in an effort to persuade them that this new school that they had not heard of was serious about co-op, and that the student interns would provide a needed service for sponsoring businesses—that this was not simply charity work. "We knew from the beginning that this concept needed the total interest of the larger community," said Dorrie Williams, who served as associate dean for cooperative education. "We had to develop a strategy to solicit participation." It was a challenging task: Early planning documents figured that LaGuardia would have to find 15,000 13-week job placements between 1971 and 1976.

Considerable time and energy were expended on a careful deliberation over exactly what kind of co-op this program would be. Among the models studied was a co-op program at Northeastern University in Boston, which had a work-based, career focus (for example, a student majoring in chemical engineering would be placed in chemical engineering internships) and one at Antioch College in Ohio, a liberal arts school where co-op gave greater emphasis to learning through experience. Eventually, LaGuardia tried to forge a middle ground, more pedagogical than the Northeastern program, but more pragmatic and focused than Antioch's. The program, according to the school's master plan, had four objectives in mind: to provide work experience; aid students in refining marketable skills; help liberal arts students in developing career plans, and involve students and faculty in relevant issues in the city environment. It was an ambitious task, and LaGuardia was the only community college in the nation with this sort of mission.

Raymond Schoenberg of the Registrar's Office recalled days when GPAs were calculated on primitive and noisy computers.

The fledgling co-op staff spent weeks researching companies, writing brochures to sent to prospective employers and talking about the college and the program to business leaders and personnel managers in an attempt to find what Dean Heinemann called "real jobs." The college enlisted a member of the Queens Chamber of Commerce in an effort to reach out to the private sector. "The message was: This service, this product would be a cost benefit to them," Dorrie Williams said. "We didn't want corporations to think of it as a social responsibility."

Instead, the appeal was to a company's bottom line. Some of the earliest contacts were with such firms as Fischer Electronics in Long Island City, Bloomingdale's, Manufacturers Hanover, McGraw-Hill and International Business Machines. Some students also worked at the College.

Co-op was more than just an opportunity to gain work experience and thus have a ready-made resume upon graduation. As the college's central theme, co-op drove LaGuardia's agenda, which placed unusual demands on LaGuardia's academic mission. Faculty were required to find the right balance between the broad intellectual vision of the school—and with a young, immensely qualified faculty, that vision was broad with an especially strong liberal arts component—with the demands of making the curriculum relevant to the central theme of co-op. With the addition of a co-op seminar, students not only had a chance to learn while on the job, but brought back those lessons to the classroom. And there was no shortage of lessons being learned on the job. In spring of 1972, at the beginning of LaGuardia's third quarter, the campus was a lonely place, for fully 200 of the college's matriculated day students were off campus on their first work assignments. The co-op division's hard work had paid off with placements at more than 100 businesses and government agencies. Students went to work as console operators, legal secretaries, actuarial clerks, junior accountants and child care workers.

Whatever conflict the focus on co-op might have created for more academic classes, there was no denying the program's appeal to students whose concerns were immediate and pragmatic. Vincent Banrey came from a family in which nobody had ever gone to college, and his high school education at Eastern Vocational had very clear and rigid goals in mind. Just before he was graduated from high school, Banrey heard of the co-op program at LaGuardia and decided, after some hesitation following a visit LaGuardia's work-in-progress facility, to postpone full-time work for a chance at both career training and a college education. "Prior to coming to LaGuardia, I didn't know what a resume was," he said. With the help of his co-op advisers, he landed internships with Exxon, the Navy Department and Busch Terminal. Eventually, he was offered a job with student services at LaGuardia while he continued his studies. Banrey received his bachelor's degree, but he never left LaGuardia while rising in his position in Student Services.

Professor John Williams of the Humanities Department has produced and directed a number of stage performances at LaGuardia.

* * *

The students who made up LaGuardia's first class hardly had time to take stock of their unique surroundings and new circumstances when they were introduced to the whirlwind known as intensives, another LaGuardia innovation. Six hours a day for the first week of classes, students immersed themselves in such topics as Ideal Societies, Violence in American Art and Culture, History of the Vietnam War and Interaction Between Science and Society. The course titles reflected the times and the concerns of students and faculty alike.

Alice Adesman served as director of admissions, helping to "grow" enrollment during LaGuardia's infancy.

In the selection of topics for intensives, LaGuardia's administrators and faculty clearly were establishing a sense of relevancy and immediacy beyond the realm of cooperative education. They helped set a tone, too, for other courses that brought the world and the city into the classroom. The school's early years saw, in the Division of Social Sciences, classes in urban sociology, community control, and the practical politics of New York City. In such classes, campus life was a reflection of, and on, the world at large.

Of course, there were other ways for the real world to intrude on this campus hard by the elevated train and warehouses and truck routes. The challenges that came with starting up a new college in a partially renovated factory building were like nothing faculty and students had experienced. Many faculty members lacked offices, and made do with partitions that offered a semblance, though not much more, of privacy. But the unstructured, if not chaotic, atmosphere further encouraged the creative spirit for which President Shenker and his top aides and deans were striving. Faculty members were encouraged to innovate, to try something new, something different.

Professor Max Rodriguez recalls getting lost in the maze and anarchy that was part of the learning experience at LaGuardia in the early years.

Inculcated with such a spirit of adventure, and free from the scowling presence of a vast bureaucracy, faculty members turned to each other for ideas that crossed traditional subject areas. English professors found themselves sharing space with political scientists, and the result was a cross-pollination of ideas that would become another one of LaGuardia's trademarks—collaboration among faculty and disciplines. In some ways, the coming together of disparate topics and lectures was symbolized in the expanse of the Great Hall, where faculty, administrators and students gathered in what served as a communal lounge, recreation area and an ad-hoc space for classrooms.

During his first week on campus in the fall of 1972, Dr. Max Rodriguez, a newly hired professor in the Division of Language and Culture, was scheduled to tape-record some native Spanish speakers for his Spanish class. The session was scheduled for the Great Hall, but when Rodriguez showed up in the cavernous room, he saw students playing basketball and figured he was in the wrong place. He tried to return to the carved-out space that he called an office, but got lost and wandered through the old factory. "And I said, that's it," he said, suggesting the level of frustration such conditions sometimes inspired. Needless to say, he didn't mean it.

While LaGuardia's slap-dash facilities imposed inconveniences, rarely did they rise to the level of obstacles. The sound of jackhammers punctuated some lectures, which, if nothing else, impressed on faculty members the importance of voice projection. One English class was interrupted when a wall came down in mid-lecture. On one hot autumn's day, George Hamada and his science class found themselves trapped in a small classroom with windows that refused to open. Eventually, with everybody sweating profusely, workers arrived and proceeded to chisel 40 years of paint off the window frame; otherwise Professor Hamada might have been forced to change his lecture to a discussion of the greenhouse effect. Nearly everybody in the school had a similar story.

Counselor Rick Holmes advising a student during LaGuardia's early years.

"But we were having so much fun, I don't remember being bothered," Sheila Gordon, one of the college's original planners and faculty members, said of the inconveniences that came with so nontraditional a campus. "It wasn't the most comfortable place in the world, but we were all so young and energetic that it was not a problem."

With 540 students and slightly fewer than 50 faculty members, LaGuardia's scale that first year was small and intimate. Class sizes ranged from eight to twenty, which allowed for an extraordinary amount of personal contact between a young faculty and a not-much-younger student body. In addition to the intimacy of small numbers, faculty and students alike had the shared experience of teaching and learning under extraordinary startup conditions, which went a long way towards breaking down the barriers of authority. Faculty and students knew each other's names, and faculty knew what other classes their students were taking and who their other instructors were. An informal camaraderie between student and faculty marked LaGuardia as special for many years, until its sheer size and physical expansion (along with larger class sizes) made the old intimacy seem quaint. Even as late as 1980, when John H. Williams joined LaGuardia as an adjunct in music instruction, he was surprised to hear students addressing faculty members by their first name. "The informality didn't disturb the relationship between faculty and student," he said. "It just was different." So was the college's grading system, which was similarly shorn of old, authoritarian formulas. There were three passing grades: E for excellent, G for good, and P for passing. The one non-passing grade was NC, for no credit. The college did not use a grade point average on student transcripts, at least for the time being.

Harvey Wiener, an English professor, was among the guiding lights of LaGuardia's writing program.

The creative spirit clearly had an enormous impact on the founding student body and its immediate successors. The first in a series of student-produced literary journals and magazines began to appear, some under the auspices of various faculty members and divisions, others distinctly independent of any authority figures. Among the early entries in the student literary field were *Genesis* (which modestly

announced that there was "no purpose to this magazine beyond that of gaining insight into our own lives and adding meaning to our existence"). *Harvest*, which was published by the Division of Language and Culture; *Babel*, a quarterly magazine produced by LaGuardia's language students; *Indigo*, a literary publication for students, and the *Humanist*, perhaps the most ambitious periodical at least in terms of appearance, for it hoped to publish every other week. The *Humanist*'s stated goal was to "foster and promote the human philosophy."

Not all the college's extracurricular activities had such lofty goals. LaGuardia's first basketball team, coached by Peter Demetriou and nicknamed the Flyers, made its debut during the 1972-73 season, though it had no facilities for home games. For the team's second season, the school rented a gym at the Lexington School for the Deaf in Jackson Heights. The college also sponsored a bowling team under coach Donald Davidson.

Author John Williams served as City University's first distinguished professor at the community college level. He was at LaGuardia in the mid-1970s.

* * *

It was a slightly retooled and a growing college to which some 374 students from LaGuardia's initial class returned in September, 1972. The changes to the facility itself were dramatic: In the colorful words of an observer from the Middle States Association, "unexplored reaches of the ... basement floor have yielded to the plow, and now are settled by the missionaries and farmers of LaGuardia. The transformation, through judicious use of color, lighting and life, is extraordinary, and becomes in itself eloquent testimony to the bright vitality of this college."

Roberta Matthews, first chair of the English Department, would become Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

A total renovation of what would be the college's Main Building at 31-10 Thomson Avenue was well underway, although only about 104,000 square feet of the building's total of 250,000 had been made usable so far. Eventually, the ambitious, $9-million project would include new laboratories, lecture halls, lounges, classrooms, a theater and a gymnasium.

Lack of space was to become a recurring theme at LaGuardia—some professors tell stories of having been moved a half-dozen times or more. In the summer of 1972, though, a plan was put into place that would have changed the physical layout of LaGuardia. On September 22, 1972, LaGuardia formally received title to a 5.2-acre site in Astoria that had been the location of an Army Pictorial Center. The Department of Health, Education and Welfare, which owned the site, turned it over to the college for a dollar, and the administration planned to make the location LaGuardia's permanent campus, perhaps as soon as the 1974-75 academic year.

The returning students found changed circumstances, and at least one of the changes had not been accounted for when the college's founders were putting together

the school's first master plan. The second freshman class was budgeted at 500, roughly the same size as the first class. But with students pouring into the system under open admissions, the university asked LaGuardia to find room for more than 500 additional freshmen, tripling the student body from its number on Opening Day.

The new students were more diverse than LaGuardia's original freshman class, suggesting that the college's efforts to recruit more non-white students, under the leadership of Alice Adesman, the Director of Admissions, was a success. Whites made up 58 percent of the second class, down from 72 percent in the first. Twenty-six percent of the class was black, an increase from 18 percent. More dramatically, however, the September 1972 students were a great deal poorer. A study showed a "sharp rise in the proportion of students reporting a family income of less than $3,000" per year. In addition, the new class was found to be in greater need of remediation in basic reading, language and mathematics skills. The faculty prepared to adjust accordingly. In the Division of Language and Culture, for example, greater emphasis would be placed on basic writing.

In the academic quarter that began in September, 1972, some 160 course sections were offered, roughly triple the number that had been offered during the summer quarter of the same year. The Business Division set up a program with the American Institute of Banking to allow LaGuardia students to receive credit for courses taken at the AIB. The division also introduced a new intensive in mass marketing for students interested in food merchandising. It was, at the time, the only course of its kind in the nation.

Marian Arkin, an early English faculty member, created LaGuardia's writing center.

The arts have long been an important part of life at LaGuardia, and have been emphasized from the very beginning. For the school's second year, the Division of Language and Culture, under the dynamic leadership of George Groman, introduced several courses in painting as well as an intensive in art and society. And, in an early example of the importance of multiculturalism and the role it would play in the American academy, the Division offered a courses in Hispanic culture taught by Max Rodriguez and Dr. Flora Mancuso Edwards (who later moved from LaGuardia to the presidencies of Hostos Community College and Middlesex Community College) as well as a course in Hebrew and an intensive on the Haitian community — long before the great wave of Haitian immigration to New York.

The Language and Culture faculty also had a clear and practical understanding of the challenges it would face, especially in light of the poorer, more need-intensive student who came to LaGuardia in Year Two. One faculty member was helping the University to develop what was, for the times, state-of-the-art techniques to teach basic English writing skills using audio-visual equipment. Subtly, too, faculty members adjusted their mission from teaching literature to composition. Early English faculty members like Harvey Wiener, Gil Muller, Marian Arkin, Alan Berman and

Roberta Matthews broke new pedagogical ground in developing instructional materials designed to meet the needs of basic writers. That did not mean, however, a dilution in course work or a less-challenging curriculum. In spring, 1973, the novelist John A. Williams was appointed to LaGuardia's faculty as a distinguished professor in the Division of Language and Culture—the first time in City University history that an instructor with such a title was appointed to a community college faculty. (Williams was no stranger to LaGuardia. He had participated in an intensive entitled "Art, Politics and Protest" in December, 1972.)

The Division of Natural Environment added six new courses in science and mathematics to go along with the opening of a new mathematics laboratory. An intensive that proved popular with faculty and students alike brought classes to the urban coastline. At such places as Orchard Beach and Plumb Beach, students armed with nets and collection bottles brought back samples of marine life to Long Island City. The science lab that George Hamada envisioned when he found a room with a sink, however, remained elusive, one of the first year's disappointments.

John Bihn, chair of the Natural and Applied Sciences Department, oversaw the development of LaGuardia's science laboratories.

It wasn't long, however, before lab-building began in earnest, and the faculty member who oversaw the construction of these vital facilities was Dr. John Bihn. Bihn had been hired as a lab technician, but he soon became as familiar with the fine points of cabinetry as any general contractor. From a sink and a few extension cords, LaGuardia's science facilities grew to include biology, chemistry and physics labs. In later years, Bihn would be involved in the construction of labs for occupational therapy, physical therapy, nursing, veterinary technology and dietetics, often working with colleagues such as John Melick and William Pan.

In other area, adjustments started to be put in place in response to student demands and the anticipated needs of the labor market. A faculty committee was empaneled to establish a broad new curriculum in Human Services, a field that also was at the heart of LaGuardia's mission and was a natural outgrowth of the spirit of service which motivated the school's faculty and administrators. Included in the new core curriculum would be courses in mental health, child care, and narcotics addiction services. LaGuardia's planners had anticipated by at least a decade many of the needs of New Yorkers who were unknowingly hurtling towards a global economy and enormous changes in family and social relationships. The college's planning documents noted that "in the human and public services there has already been extensive job development and training ... to meet the rapidly increasing demands for services. Fields for possible curriculum development are child care, education, social service, geriatrics...." An intensive in Understanding Social Welfare Institutions was added, as well as a seminar in human services and a course in the sociology of the family. In November, 1974, Augusta Kappner was appointed chairperson of the school's Division of Human Services.

The sciences became increasingly important at LaGuardia in the 1980s. The college's labs were an important part of that growth.

Changes and adjustments were underway in other divisions as well. In the Division of Natural Environment, George Hamada and Raymond Bowen saw an opportunity to respond to labor-market needs and student demand by proposing the introduction of programs in the allied health field. Hamada brought Naomi Greenberg, an occupational therapist, to LaGuardia to serve as a consultant in setting up an occupational therapy program—the school's first health career program. The plan met with some resistance at first, in the main because it appeared to deviate from the school's master plan and its concentration on business and human services. Eventually, however, the master plan was revised to include development of an allied health curriculum, and 25 students were admitted into the program when it began in the fall of 1973. The addition of an allied health program produced a change that would have a dramatic impact on LaGuardia in the 1980s, when demand for health and medical careers exploded.

Naomi Greenberg working with science students.

LaGuardia's ability to move quickly in response to changing needs and circumstances was rooted in its commitment to the city, borough and neighborhood. A major component of the school's outreach was, and is, its Division of Continuing Education and Extension Services, an outgrowth of what originally was the Office of Grants and Continuing Education. The Division's mission was to bring non-credit instruction and learning to places where even a non-traditional college like LaGuardia could not go on its own. When the program started, it served 125 students. The number eventually would grow to more than 20,000, with a broad selection of courses chosen carefully after assessing the community's needs. "From the beginning, we were interested in providing entry (into higher education) for adults who wouldn't think of going to college," said Ann Marcus, who served as the Division's chair.

President Shenker awards a student his diploma at LaGuardia's first commencement.

The Division's ability to reach underserved populations was exemplified in several early initiatives. From the beginning, it recognized the importance of language a potential barrier to student achievement, so it sponsored summer courses in English as a Second Language at City University's Center for Graduate Education in midtown Manhattan. In an attempt to reach out to a neighbor, LaGuardia established a non-credit program in the Queens House of Detention, introducing a high school equivalency program as well as courses in basic education, English as a Second Language and in ethnic cultures and literature.

One of the Division's earliest initiatives was the establishment of a Veterans Education Center, which opened in January, 1972. It was aimed at Vietnam-era veterans at a time when soldiers returning from the battlefields of Mekong and Danang were shunted aside from mainstream society. Initially, the center charged a fee for its programs, but when LaGuardia's administrators realized that many of the vets had little money, the school's assiduous grant-writers were sent into action, leading to the abolition of the fee and greater opportunity for the veterans. (The Middle States Association later noted that LaGuardia had "an amazing batting average in funding proposals.")

Other outreach programs included establishment of senior citizen's centers in the

Queensbridge and Woodside neighborhoods of western Queens. Queensbridge opened first, and offered classes in Drama, Folk Dancing and Conversational Spanish, but, after consultation with the seniors, the curriculum for both centers changed, and classes in Public Speaking, History, Spanish and English Writing were organized.

Two milestones in the college's development took place in December, 1972. On December 5, the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association informed President Shenker that LaGuardia had been accepted as a "recognized candidate for accreditation." Several days later, LaGuardia graduated its first students—a class consisting of four women who were enrolled in the Education Associate Program for Board of Education paraprofessionals that had started six months before LaGuardia officially opened. The graduates—Diane Faison, Joyce Heron, Lottie Spriggs and Margaret Madden—took on extra course loads to finish their degree requirements in about eighteen months. At a small ceremony, Fern Khan, director of the Education Associates program, presented the graduates with their diplomas, and President Shenker was on hand to congratulate them.

As much as the occasion was a milestone, it was not without a bit of comedy. When the registrar's office attempted to run off copies of the new graduates' transcripts (after a clunky, primitive calculator managed to figure out everybody's grade point average), there was no paper in the house. Raymond Schoenberg and others in the registrar's office searched high and low, and even asked other colleges if they had any paper to spare. Fortunately, Staten Island Community College did, so LaGuardia's first transcripts were printed on paper bearing the name and logo of S.I.C.C. "For years we had to reassure people that yes, they had taken the courses at LaGuardia and not on Staten Island," Schoenberg recalled.

The mini-commencement was but a prelude to the historic occasion of LaGuardia's first full commencement exercises, which were held on Sunday, September 16, in Colden Auditorium on the campus of Queens College. The keynote speaker was Brooklyn Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, a Democrat who was a year removed from becoming the first African-American woman to run for a major party's presidential nomination.

As the members of the Class of 1973 celebrated (and administrators and faculty quietly exulted in this rite of passage), LaGuardia's future seemed limitless. The promise of opportunity was being delivered in the old factory building in Long Island City. The school, and the university itself, had embarked on a radical journey to bring higher education to the excluded and underserved, and, on that Sunday afternoon in 1973, everything seemed to be in working order.

The spirit of the age, however, was about to change.

Commencement Day.

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CHAPTER THREE

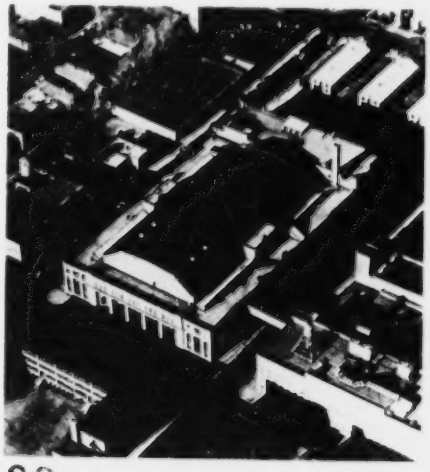
Growing Pains

There was little reason to believe that anything was amiss as LaGuardia's students assembled for the academic year of 1973-74. A few weeks after the fall semester began, New York voters chose Abe Beame as their new Mayor after a campaign that exhibited no particular sense of urgency. Beame was the city's first Jewish Mayor, born in London of Polish immigrants and reared on the streets of Brooklyn. He seized the freedoms New York gave him, earning an accounting degree from City College—he was the first (and thus far, only) City University graduate to hold the city's highest elective office.

Nobody, not even the new Mayor himself, knew that a fiscal crisis of historic proportions, one that would profoundly affect LaGuardia and the university itself, was lurking around the corner.

To the administrators, faculty, staff and students at LaGuardia, the only crisis on campus involved, as always, space. But the eternal displacement of offices and classes did nothing to dampen the enthusiasm and spirit of adventure as the college grew out of its infancy. A Middle States observer noted that among LaGuardia's immediate challenges was finding a way to innovate, experiment and, in general, stay young once the excitement of the first years wore off.

Meeting such a challenge required an administration willing to take risks, and under President Shenker and the team of special assistants, deans and chairs he assembled,



The film studio in Astoria, Queens, that was the prospective new site for LaGuardia's campus.

innovation continued to be one of LaGuardia's hallmarks. One such experiment was entitled Satellite College, which was intended to formalize LaGuardia's commitment to ground-breaking interdisciplinary studies. Though short-lived, Satellite College succeeded in breaking down rigid divisions among fields, and it served as a precursor to LaGuardia's highly regarded experiments in learning communities. "Everything was thematic," recalled Raymond Bowen, who headed the program during its short existence. "There were a lot of experiments going on." One such experiment combined writing, sociology and psychology by asking students to write news articles for three disparate newspapers based on a hypothetical race riot in Queens. "Understanding the philosophies of the different ethnic groups in New York, I wanted them to write an article as they thought it would appear in the *New York Times*, another article as it might appear in the *New York Post* or *Daily News* and another as it might appear in the *Amsterdam News*," Bowen recalled. "So you would have to know the psychology and sociology of the different ethnic groups to write these reports. In this way, we brought those three fields together in a collaboration."

President Shenker with Queens Borough President Claire Shulman.

Such was the spirit on campus even as a municipal drama was unfolding in Manhattan's world of politics and municipal finance. As word spread of LaGuardia's fresh approach and its commitment to the underserved, people who never thought they'd see the inside of a college classroom suddenly found themselves passing through the Great Hall with notebooks in hand. One such student was a 43-year-old former gang member and prisoner named Theodore Toler, who began his studies at LaGuardia in the fall of 1973. Already plagued with doubts about his abilities, Toler also was extremely self-conscious about his age. When he walked into his first mathematics class, a student already in the classroom said, in a stage whisper, "There's the teacher!" Toler was embarrassed, but he resolved not to let the incident discourage him. Eventually, he won the first writing contest in the school's history for a story he entitled "The Cisco Kid," which was based on his experiences in New York's gang life.

Mary Abkemeier helped establish the Natural and Applied Science Department.

Like so many other students, Toler received encouragement and attention from a faculty whose mission was designed to be student-centered. "The support we received from faculty was unbelievable," said Peter Maturro, Class of 1973. "I don't think you'd have found such support anywhere in the country. When I look back on it, I realize it was a lucky deal for me." Maturro, who lived in Corona, Queens, had come to LaGuardia after barely making it through Newtown High School. He chose to major in business administration for no particular reason. "I really had no direction when I came to LaGuardia," he said. That began to change almost right away as individual professors, especially Sarah Barber, Sheila Gordon and Gilbert Muller, and advisers such as Ben Baim and Steven Brown, introduced him to a world he never knew. And that

introduction was taken to another level when he signed up for Professor Barber's week-long intensive exploring art upstate in the mountains. "I really had never been away from home, aside from vacations in the Rockaways," he said. "This was a different world. We talked to artists who lived there and with townspeople, and we all kept diaries and afterwards we all contributed to a journal. I have to say that it was one of the highlights of my experience at LaGuardia. Professor Barber made me look at things in a different way, and was interested not only in my writing, but in helping me develop as a person."

Ruth Lebovitz was an early member of the counseling faculty.

Later, during his first two co-op internships, Maturro realized that he wasn't cut out for the business world. His third and last internship was in an alternative high school for trouble students. There, he said, he found his calling. He went on to become a social worker, and—ironically enough, given LaGuardia's urban setting and mission—thanks to his unforgettable week in the mountains, he eventually moved to the foothills of the Catskills, where he is raising his own family. "We do a lot of camping together," he said. "Thanks to LaGuardia, doors opened to a new experience."

Daniel Magngan came to LaGuardia in the late 1970s, when he was 28. An average student at John Adams High School, he blossomed at LaGuardia because, he said, faculty members encouraged him to set his sights high. Early in his first year, he was assigned to write a term paper about his neighborhood, Ozone Park. "I went to the central library in Queens for the first time in my life," he said. "I spent hours there." Several faculty members complimented him on his writing and research, "which told me that they would go the extra mile for students.... Without the faculty, I probably would have been mentally defeated. Instead I was a straight-A student." Years later, Magngan said he still regarded his years at LaGuardia as "the big achievement of my life."

Of course, student life wasn't confined to the classroom, although how much time students spent on campus depended on their often-hectic off-campus lives. Many students from the early years took full course loads—including their co-op internships—while working part-time or taking care of family responsibilities. Others, like Maxine Lance, found their lives intertwining with LaGuardia's. Lance, another member of the college's first graduating class, spent long hours in the Great Hall, where courtships developed and friendships formed. She met other friends through the school's Black American Club, one of 26 clubs that came into existence during the college's first few years. There were clubs for a variety of interest areas, including Accounting, Asian, Music, Greek, Literary, Haitian, Italian, Spiritual Awareness, Theater and Law and Justice. The feeling on campus among students, she said, "was more like family. Everybody mingled together." She and her friends often gathered for breakfast in the Great Hall, where,

U.S. Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan and President Shenker.

she said, students paid as little as $1 for a hearty meal of fresh pancakes.

A portion of the Great Hall was given the name Sangria Junction, a place where students congregated between classes to relax, play pool, ping pong or frisbee football, or simply soak up the atmosphere of college life. A campus radio station, WLGC, piped in music from its studio in the college's rented facilities in the nearby Sony building. A student newspaper, *Fiorello's Flute*, kept students informed of the latest developments on campus and stirred up discussion with lively coverage of student government elections. Soon, the college instituted dances on Friday and Saturday nights, giving students a further chance to mingle and solidifying LaGuardia's place in their lives.

Congresswoman Elizabeth Holtzman at LaGuardia's 1976 commencement.

Later in 1974, the college embarked on what would become one of its most successful and nationally recognized innovations when Middle College High School opened its doors for the first time. The high school had been in the planning stages since 1971, when Janet Lieberman and other educators began designing an alternative high school designed to suit the needs of the city's young people and help reduce the city's high dropout rate. As a collaborative effort between LaGuardia and the Board of Education, Middle College quickly gained a reputation as a national leader in educating at-risk high school students, and it enhanced LaGuardia's reputation for creativity and innovation.

By the time the college graduated its second class in September, 1974, the school's future still seemed limitless. But limits were about to be realized, for New York City was broke. There were civic leaders, financial mavens and politicians who would soon be saying that the city could no longer afford such luxuries as free tuition at City University. There were even some who thought the city could no longer afford its commitment to its newest and most vulnerable institution of higher learning—LaGuardia Community College.

Dan Lynch became chair of the English Department in the 1980s.

On July 17, 1975, several bankers and politicians, including Mayor Beame, met to discuss the city's deteriorating financial condition. The Mayor agreed that dramatic action was called for. There was talk of wage freezes for city workers and drastic service cuts. But that was not enough. Then the unmentionable was mentioned. Felix Rohatyn, an investment banker and chairman of the Municipal Assistance Corporation, formally proposed that New York end its long tradition of providing free higher education.

Mayor Beame protested, pointing out that 71 percent of City University's 275,000 students came from families with incomes of less than $14,000 per year. At the time, City University's only charge was $105 per year for senior college and $60 for community colleges. While no decision was made at that fateful July 17 meeting, Mayor Beame's protests would be in vain.

Several weeks later, City University Chancellor Robert Kibbee

imposed a stunning 20 percent cut to the university's operating budget. The plan also called for elimination of the very philosophy that was part of LaGuardia's reason for being—open admissions.

The crisis was taking hold on LaGuardia's campus. The overall budget cuts were trickling down, and President Shenker was preparing for a $1.8 million cut to the college's budget. Suddenly, the main topic of discussion at LaGuardia was not innovation but survival. In the fall of 1975, the president ordered a 15 percent increase in class size, cuts to LaGuardia's immensely effective counseling program and a layoff of part-time secretarial staff. The college's equipment budget also was drastically reduced. A headline in *Fiorello's Flute* read: "LaGuardia Gets Cut, Students Get Shafted."

From the beginning, LaGuardia has been a work in progress. Here, President Shenker and City Comptroller Harrison J. Goldin view renovations underway in 1980.

By the spring of 1976, the Board of Higher Education—City University's governing body—was $70 million in the red. Soon, faculty members throughout the University were placed on furlough for two weeks without pay and the system was shut down. The city was in no position to help, for it was on the verge of bankruptcy. It was around this time that Dr. Roberta Matthews, who would go on to become an associate dean for academic affairs, received a telephone call one morning from her husband. He said he had heard a report that the city would be out of money by the afternoon, so she ought to cash her paycheck as soon as possible.

Not surprisingly, at a time when even police officers were being laid off—putting an end to the notion that such civil service jobs were guaranteed for life—there was talk of folding LaGuardia and allowing its students to be absorbed by Queensborough Community College. In fact, that exact proposal was floated for a short time. "At the time, we were the new kids on the block, and there were serious proposals for downsizing the entire university," said Harry Heinemann. "There actually were hit lists (of college closings), and whenever you saw one, LaGuardia was at the top." Fearing such a possibility, the many friends and allies LaGuardia already had made in the community responded with testimonials praising the college's efforts. The Clergy Council of Northwest Queens sent letters to all 10 members of the Board of Higher Education, telling them that LaGuardia's "unique cooperative education program combined with the many diverse community programs the college offers our residents makes it essential that LaGuardia continue to function and expand in Western Queens." The business community, which understood the critical role LaGuardia was playing in training the city's future work force, also rallied to the school's support.

Barbara Muir contributed to the development of the mathematics curriculum.

In truth LaGuardia was never in any real danger, thanks in part to the strategy it followed and the knowledge President Shenker had of the Board of Higher Education's methods and philosophy, having spent the late 1960s as the Board's director of community colleges. He also was well-placed politically, with a vast array of contacts

throughout the educational and political establishment. "Joe brought an uncanny knowledge of the inner workings of the University and the political system," Heinemann recalled. "That was important, not only in getting us through the fiscal crisis, but also in getting us the money we needed to grow and expand once the crisis was over. If there had been somebody less skilled at the helm, we might have been in trouble." LaGuardia could not have had a more forceful or better-connected advocate.

Artist Peter Brown of the Humanities Department practiced what he taught.

That is not to say, however, that the impact of the crisis went unnoticed in Long Island City. Money became so short that the college didn't publish a bulletin for the 1976-77 academic year. "The whole planning process stopped in the fiscal crisis," President Shenker recalled. "We had started renovations (to the Main Building) but everything had to be put on hold." And some things had to be scrapped. The huge site in Astoria that the college acquired from the Department of Health and Human Services in 1974 was sacrificed in the name of austerity, thus canceling the college's long-term plan to move either some or all of its operations there. "Just guarding the complex ... and heating it was a huge cost," President Shenker said. So it was sold off.

The college also embarked on an aggressive strategy to ward off the arguments of those who believed that LaGuardia, with its small student population and work-in-progress facilities, could be closed with minimal impact on students. At a time of shrinking budgets, LaGuardia's enrollment grew enormously through the years of crisis. The growth was not an accident. From his years at the Board of Higher Education, President Shenker knew that within the University, the number that commanded the most respect was the full-time student population (or, in the language of City University, full-time equivalents, known as FTE's). City University's funding was doled out by a formula dictated by the number of FTE's on campus. "The name of the game in City University is the number of FTE's," said Janet Lieberman, one of the school's founders. "Prestige and power within the University come with the amount of dollars you command." By increasing its FTE population from 3,303 in 1973-74 to 7,569 in 1978-79, LaGuardia strengthened its hand and made it harder to argue that it was a luxury City University could not afford.

Umoja Kwanguvu coordinated program operations for student activities.

The strategy, Shenker said, was designed "to get LaGuardia's name off the list of possible mergers and closures. It was a baseline decision to grow very rapidly, with the idea being that if we achieved a certain size, we no longer would be so small that we could easily be absorbed. Our dollars went down and growth went up."

Understanding that faculty morale was vital during such hard times, particularly in light of unpaid furloughs and persistent rumors of the city's impending financial collapse, President Shenker expedited the tenure process with key faculty members. Nineteen faculty and staff members attended a reception on January 20, 1976, in honor of being

granted tenure, and the President moved to grant early tenure to two other faculty members, Harvey Wiener and Gilbert Muller, both associate professors in the Division of Language and Culture. Tenure relieved senior faculty members from the real fear that layoffs might have thrown them out of work. As it turned out, no faculty were laid off at LaGuardia, a startling contrast with some older schools where, all told, 1,000 untenured faculty members were dismissed.

Meanwhile, a reconstituted Board of Higher Education ended a tradition of free higher education that had its roots in the Free Academy of pre-Civil War New York. Beginning in September, 1976, LaGuardia's students would have to pay $650 a year. The impact of the decision was brought home to LaGuardia's students in an edition of *Fiorello's Flute* devoted almost exclusively to questions about financial aid.

When classes began in September, enrollment throughout City University was down by 35,000. LaGuardia experienced its first fall-to-fall decrease in raw headcount, from 4,676 students enrolled in September, 1975, to 4,540 students in September, 1976. As if to make a statement about the turn of events, LaGuardia chose Congresswomen Elizabeth Holtzman to deliver the keynote address at its fourth commencement exercises in September, 1976. She was a stalwart defender of free tuition, and she accused the city of caving in to "a hostile federal government and an envious country."

Two months after LaGuardia and the university itself began charging tuition, with the city still mired in crisis and gloom, an explosion rocked the Chicle factory on 31st Street, adjacent to LaGuardia's Main Building. The blast was terrifying, shattering windows and damaging the school's day care center. Worse, six people were killed, and among the seriously injured was a LaGuardia student and Chicle employee, Jerry Podhajecki, a data processing major who was in the plant at the time of the blast. His brother also was seriously injured. The explosion set back some of the already delayed renovations to the Main Building.

Professor Joanne Reitano of the Social Science Department assisted in the developing LaGuardia's Teaching Application Reinforcement Program and has been active in developing urban studies.

Despite the hardships, LaGuardia was making progress, remarkable progress, considering the depth of the crisis. While many plans were put on hold or, as in the case of the Astoria campus, dropped entirely, the school's creative spirit remained in evidence. So did the physical manifestations of the college's growth and permanence. In the midst of the fiscal crisis, the renovation of the Main Building continued, and in June, 1976, a portion of the renovated facility opened, with 88,000 square feet of gleaming new offices and classrooms. The library, bookstore, day care center and an assortment of other offices moved into the new space, and 18 months of inconvenience, of shifting classrooms and extended use of leased facilities, came to an end—to an extent, that is. Because of the city's perilous finances, the renovation was not completed in one piece: Work still had to be done on 44,000 square feet fronting Thomson Avenue. It was, though, a milestone all the same, and a bit of much-needed good news.

Even in the face of the city's financial crisis, LaGuardia's mission was intact, its commitment to its students unchanged. Faculty members continued to develop programs, explore new areas and dare to experiment as they had done before. New programs, such as development of an office for institutional research under the direction of Dan Ehrlich, came into existence. With the college's growth, new professors were hired, many of them coming from the ranks of adjuncts who had helped with the college's course load during the first few years. Among the adjuncts hired for full-time work were Dr. Denise Carter, in mathematics, and Dr. Brian Gallagher, in English. Carter taught part-time for two years before joining LaGuardia full-time in 1978. By then, the system of academic divisions had given way to traditional departments, and the Mathematics Department was chaired by Roy McLeod. "I was new to teaching, and fortunately, our Chair gave us direction," Carter said.

Professor Joseph McPhee working with science students.

New faculty, of course, had their eyes on winning tenure, and each department chair helped shepherd along the junior faculty towards that goal. Carter recalled that McLeod was particularly helpful, moving young professors along a five-year, step-by-step plan: "The first year we spent getting to know the college and the department," she said. "In the second year, we branched out to college-wide committees, the third year we spent presenting papers, working on professional development and getting on outside committees. By the fourth year, we were doing what we could to improve in all areas." Year Five was the magic year.

From a faculty and administrative perspective, one of the most important changes at LaGuardia in the mid-1970s had nothing to do with fiscal crisis and budgetary constraints. It was the elimination of LaGuardia's unique divisional system and its replacement by more traditional academic departments. Some faculty and administrators, such as Rose Palmer, were firm believers in the divisional system; others found it unwieldy for an ambitious college that was growing and intended to grow even bigger. Professors such as David Wertheimer said the change didn't affect the classroom experience, although he believed that the breakup of the Business Division into three departments allowed for an even greater degree of intimacy among faculty members.

The change meant the creation of an assortment of new academic departments that had no separate identity under the old system. To cite just two examples, the English and Humanities Departments were the offspring of the Division of Language and Culture, and the Mathematics Department broke free of the Division of Natural Environment. New departments required the appointment of chairs and a major reorganization of the way in which academic programs were developed. They also created some creative tension between onetime partners. Peter Brown, a sculptor and professor in the new Humanities Department, noted that he and his colleagues "always

had a slight chip on our shoulders because we were always the elective department." At the time of the breakup, none of the department's courses was attached to a core requirement. Even still, he and other faculty found the new arrangement liberating, allowing for more innovation and program development.

"We were creative even in naming the courses," recalled Max Rodriguez, a humanities professor. "We developed a series of survey courses in culture and history that we named French Life and Institutions, Italian Life and Institutions, Hispanic Life and Institutions, and so on." But creativity sometimes brings unintended consequences: LaGuardia's students had a hard time transferring the "Life and Institutions" credits when admissions offices in other colleges found the course description too creative. "So eventually we had to rename the courses as general surveys of particular civilizations. We had to comply with the nomenclature despite our best judgment."

Joel Millonzi chaired the Social Science Department for several years.

The college also took advantage of its urban setting to develop a series of classes in urban studies, focusing on the arts, on music, literature, history and other aspects of city life. One course that made a particularly memorable impression on students was a history of New York City, taught by Richard Lieberman, Joanne Reitano and several adjuncts. Margaret Hunte, a student in her mid-40s whose children already had gone to college, recalled signing up for the course and thinking, "This is going to be a cinch. I've been in New York all my life." She was amazed to discover what she didn't know. Field trips to several historic sites taught her "about the era of Boss Tweed, about Robert Moses, about all the things you didn't learn elsewhere." She also learned something about the future of New York when she and the class studied the city's demographic trends. "At the time areas like Flushing were Italian and Irish, but even back in the late 1970s we could see how it was going to become largely Asia. It was enlightening." Hunte went on to York College, was graduated summa cum laude, and then went on to get a master's degree in social work.

Other departments and faculty members similarly moved ahead even as news reports portrayed the city, and its university, in a relentless crisis. In the sciences, Dr. Joseph McPhee and other faculty members successfully applied for a series of grants that allowed the new Department of Natural and Applied Sciences to expand its curriculum without having to depend on non-existent city and state funds. The grant was a milestone for the department, for it allowed for growth on the eve of an explosion of interest in the allied health field. Courses in occupational therapy, physical therapy, nursing, dietetics and similar fields eventually made the department one of LaGuardia's strongest.

"The fiscal crisis wiped out money for course and program development," McPhee recalled. "The grants turned us around." First came a grant for $750,000 from

the Veterans Administration to set up a veterans retraining program, money which helped fund courses in dietetics. McPhee then applied for a grant for $200,000 from the National Science Foundation to develop courses in basic sciences, such as microbiology and bio-chemistry, to run in coordination with the applied science programs. The grants were critical because of the tricky nature of course development, McPhee noted. "The biggest problem in public colleges is this Catch-22: When you develop a new course, in order to have it implemented, you have to have a minimum number of students signed up. But students sometimes are reluctant to sign up for courses that they're not sure about." The grants, however, allowed for experimentation without affecting the college's bottom line. McPhee also helped get the college a grant from the Minority Institutional Science Improvement Program to improve instructional support for science students.

The Program for Deaf Adults was another initiative undertaken even as budget dollars grew more scarce. The program was devised under the auspices of the Division of Continuing Education, part of what the program's founder, Fern Khan, called "our mission to reach out to all sectors of society." The program initially served only a handful of students when it started in 1975, but it would go on to serve 700 students a year and gain LaGuardia a reputation for being on the cutting edge of providing accessible higher education to deaf people. By the time the program celebrated its 20th anniversary, LaGuardia had the highest enrollment of deaf and hearing-impaired people in the entire City University system. Indeed, when Congresswoman Holtzman gave the college's commencement address in 1976, it was simultaneously translated into sign language so that 52-year-old Dorothy Pakula, LaGuardia's first deaf graduate, could fully participate in the ceremony. Mrs. Pakula, who had been deaf since birth, received both a degree and a special award for her achievement. She said the 10 other deaf students studying for degrees at LaGuardia and the several hundred enrolled in non-credit courses were "lucky" to have such a program.

The college's grant writers continued to find success during the city's hard times, allowing LaGuardia to develop new programs despite the volatile budget problems. The college received nearly $1 million in grants in 1976 and 1977 for programs on and off campus, earning LaGuardia the distinction of receiving more grant dollars per enrolled student than any other City University institution. The money allowed LaGuardia to bring its message of empowerment and spirit of innovation well beyond the borders of Long Island City.

For example, a federal grant of $147,000 allowed the college to establish an adult learning center at the Queens House of Detention in Kew Gardens. Another federal grant, this one for $62,000, led to the establishment of a program called IMPACT, which offered courses in human services, social sciences, reading and writing to mostly middle-aged students who had never gone to college before. Based in Long

Island City and in Astoria, the program was designed not only to provide the beginnings of a college education, but also to help groom future community leaders.

It was this sort of outreach to communities at their most basic level that characterized LaGuardia's off-campus activities and demonstrated that the passage of time and the burdens of fiscal uncertainty had not dampened the enthusiasms of the school's founders. It seemed only natural that a college that offered courses in the nitty-gritty of New York's political, cultural and social life would also extend its mission to communities in hopes of reaching new people.

That spirit was obvious in one of the college's earliest off-campus outreach endeavors, a program run in conjunction with a group of neighborhood women in the Greenpoint section of Brooklyn. While short-lived, the program reflected LaGuardia's willingness to experiment wherever there might be an interest in higher education and training—the women in Greenpoint had visions of having their own degree programs in their community.

Another successful outreach program in Brooklyn came about in 1978 after years of discussion. With the help of $630,000 in grants, LaGuardia launched a formal affiliation with the Red Hook Family Day Care Training Center, bringing the college to another struggling industrial neighborhood whose residents were trying desperately to cope with a changed economy and culture. Under the direction of Augusta Kappner, then Dean of Continuing Education, the program provided day care providers with a chance to earn college credit as part of their training. It was a far-sighted program, anticipating the last big push of women baby boomers into the job market, a development that led to greater demands for quality day care. The program also sought to help parents themselves, and in its first year of operation held more than 700 workshops for parents. In a display of its commitment to the program, LaGuardia hosted a two-day learning fair in 1979 for 136 newly licensed day care providers and observers from various government agencies.

No doubt one of the most satisfying moments in what was a difficult time for the college came in 1976 when the federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare chose LaGuardia to develop a national model for career education. LaGuardia was the only community college in the country chosen.

With a federal grant of $208,000, LaGuardia was offered a chance to restructure its liberal arts offerings to reflect work-related concerns, develop an exchange program that would allow faculty members a chance to participate in private-sector internships, and host two national conferences on career education. The national recognition was a morale-booster for everyone at LaGuardia, particularly when the media began to take notice. *New York* magazine published an article on

cooperative education that featured LaGuardia's achievements, noting that students who entered the work force immediately upon graduation earned an average salary of $8,100 a year—while their families' median income was $8,000. The federal recognition and the publicity were a sign that something of great importance was building, brick by brick, on Thomson Avenue, even at a time when people were wondering about the future of City University and the city itself.

Augusta Kappner served as dean of Continuing Education.

In conjunction with the co-op internships, LaGuardia faculty developed a program called Teaching Application Reinforcement, known by its acronym, TAR. Founded by Irwin Feifer and implemented by various faculty members, including Dr. Joanne Reitano and Professors Cathy Farrell and Diane Ducat, it was a groundbreaking attempt to link the classroom and work experience in the belief that students could learn better if they could apply classroom knowledge to their workplace experiences. In many ways, the TAR program served as a bridge between traditional vocational education and non-traditional pedagogical approaches to learning.

Students who were working at their internships would attend seminars in various fields designed to build on what they were learning in the workplace. Social Sciences faculty developed a seminar that reinforced concepts taught in the Introduction to Social Science course. It included exploring the theme of power in the workplace. "One student I had was working in a health facility and her colleagues wouldn't give her a key to the office, so she couldn't get in until they showed up," recalled Professor Reitano. "We talked about power, how it manifested itself in the control of the key, and a light went off in her head: Now she understood what was going on. And instead of feeling bitter about it, she was better equipped to handle it." In the Social Science-based TAR seminars, students discussed the culture of their workplaces, from accepted styles of dress to something as prosaic as whether or not employees chewed gum on the job. In doing so, faculty helped them identify the cultural keys that would be critical in their future success in the workplace. Other TAR seminars were developed in English, the Humanities, Communication Skills, and Business.

Diane Ducat, long-time faculty member, was on the team that developed Teaching Application Reinforcement.

The TAR seminars were a national model in the field, and the program's manuals were published and sought after by other colleges.

As the pall of crisis lifted slowly from the city and the university in the late 1970s, LaGuardia's growth continued. In 1977, for the first time since the fiscal crisis began, LaGuardia's budget was increased, by $800,000. Some $2 million in capital funds that had been frozen during the crisis were thawed out and delivered, allowing the college to purchase badly needed supplies of books and equipment. Thanks to an aggressive recruiting campaign, LaGuardia's enrollment in the fall of 1977 topped 6,000, an increase from the 4,540 who enrolled in the fall of 1976. The impressive enrollment figures came despite the imposition of tuition and the ensuing decline in enrollment throughout the University.

With a federal grant of nearly a half-million dollars, the college established an associate degree program in Dietary Technician Education to educate and train food service managers, particularly veterans. The program was part of what would become a significant commitment to the allied health field as jobs and student interest expanded in the 1980s.

Further expansion was evident as the decade neared a close, as LaGuardia established an alternative degree program designed for adult students, allowing them to earn an associate degree by designing an individualized program in consultation with a faculty adviser.

Meanwhile, at a time when homelessness, domestic abuse and other critical issues were not part of the mainstream national dialogue, LaGuardia under the leadership of Professor Larry Long was revamping its Human Services program to develop co-op internships in fields dealing with what were, at the time, hidden or ignored problems. (In fact, a bulletin announcing the initiative referred, in language that might seem quaint today, to the problems of "shopping bag ladies.")

As the college approached its 10th anniversary, the excitement of its beginnings and the trauma of the fiscal crisis were over. The college was moving forward with plans for physical expansion as and well as program development. Yet with the accelerated growth and posh new offices and more defined roles for faculty, staff and administrators, there was a feeling among some that perhaps the college had slowed down a step. Gone were the days of ad-hoc decisions and nightly planning sessions at Brook's restaurant. As LaGuardia was nearing its 10th anniversary, it now had, of all things, a bureaucracy.

Julian Bond (right) marches with LaGuardia and CUNY administrators and faculty at the college's second commencement.

Building New York
One Mind at a Time.
10

CHAPTER FOUR

Maturity

On the evening of November 16, 1981, a crowd of dignitaries, politicians, administrators, faculty and staff filed into LaGuardia Community College's theater for what promised to be a memorable ceremony. After people found their seats and dispensed with their chatter, a vaguely familiar voice resounded through the theater: "And now, on with the show!"

It was the recorded voice of none other than Fiorello LaGuardia himself, and the show to which the recording referred was the gala celebration of LaGuardia Community College's 10th anniversary.

Among those gathered to mark the occasion was LaGuardia's widow, Marie, still active at the age of 86. She had outlived her husband by more than 35 years, but remained very much a part of the college's family and of the city's political life. John Lindsay, the first Republican elected Mayor since LaGuardia, was among those who regarded Mrs. LaGuardia as a close friend. The spirit of her husband was invoked throughout the ceremonies; indeed, among the rituals that marked the occasion was the unveiling of a sculpture showing the beloved three-time Mayor in a characteristically feisty pose (and in a characteristically rumpled suit), his mouth open as if in passionate argument, one hand poised over the other to drive home the point. Eventually, the sculpture served as a model for a much larger version that was executed by Neil Estern, who had received his high school diploma from the Mayor's hands.

Marie LaGuardia with Mayor Edward Koch at LaGuardia's tenth anniversary ceremony.

Another honored guest at the anniversary celebration was a man who had begun to inspire favorable comparisons with LaGuardia, thanks to a similar personal (and, some would say, sartorial) style. Mayor Edward Koch, fresh from winning a second term in an unprecedented style—running on both the Democratic and Republican lines—was one of the evening's featured speakers, and he took the occasion to label LaGuardia Community College as "the youngest and perhaps the most special unit of the City University." After his speech, the Mayor joined Mrs. LaGuardia and President Joe Shenker in cutting a ribbon to mark the official dedication of the renovated Main Building.

Lynne Hayden, Sheila Gordon and Alexandria Lupo of the college's Development Office.

The college's 10th anniversary was an occasion for both reflection and (as modestly as possible) self-congratulation. It had been, after all, an experience all who were associated with it would never forget. Tributes to the college's excellence offered evidence that a decade's worth of work and innovation had brought forth something special. In declaring the week beginning November 16 to be LaGuardia Community College Week in New York, Mayor Koch noted that "the college's partnership with business, industry and the public sector has made a significant contribution to the economic development of our city. It epitomizes a community college by its responsiveness to community needs."

To be sure, the mood at LaGuardia was festive as the college staged a week-long celebration to mark its 10th birthday, culminating in a 10K road race for the fit and ambitious, and a one-mile run for the not-so fit and not-so ambitious. The tributes and backslapping, however, were not confined to LaGuardia's staff, faculty, administrators and students. In recognition of the vital role that private business and public offices had played in making co-op such a success, the Division of Cooperative Education held a recognition ceremony for employers who had been affiliated with the college for more than five years. Seven of the 50 companies represented had been with LaGuardia since the beginning. City Comptroller Harrison J. Goldin, himself a participant in the program, told the honorees that they "should be emissaries to the larger business community, carrying the message that it pays to hire LaGuardia students."

Professor John Chaffee of the Humanties Department helped develop the college's critical thinking skills program.

It was with good reason that LaGuardia celebrated throughout the 1981-82 academic year. By any measure, it was as though the hard times of the mid- to late-1970s had never happened, or, if they did, they belonged to another age entirely. This more optimistic, forward-looking era was symbolized in the long-awaited opening of the renovated Main Building, which resulted in the year-long transfer of personnel and equipment from leased facilities in the adjacent L&P Building. Even with the grand ribbon-cutting and the shuffling of offices and people from old to brand-new facilities, though, the Main Building remained unfinished—there was still some wrap-up work to be done in the library, theater and music room.

Everywhere LaGuardia's students, faculty and staff turned, there were signs that the bad old days of budget reductions and stifled growth were over. As the college

completed its first decade and looked ahead to its second, LaGuardia was growing faster than any public college in the state. Enrollment from fall of 1979 to fall of 1980 increased by 5 percent, to 6,600, at a time when City University as a whole continued to lose students. This astonishing growth meant that even with the renovations to the Main Building, LaGuardia had City University's highest concentration of students per square foot, making it necessary to lease additional space in the Executone Building next door.

Among the students who were part of the college's extraordinary growth in the early 1980s was John Ribeiro, who was able to continue his education thanks to the SEEK program, which provided financial aid for low-income students. He, like so many other students, chose LaGuardia because of its co-op program — and like so many other students, he found a great deal more about his city, his world and himself. "When I first went to LaGuardia it was for business administration, but I didn't feel comfortable with it," he said. As his interest in music grew, he and his teachers agreed that he ought to switch his major to liberal arts, where he discovered poetry, Shakespeare and Malcolm X. "I was inspired to read more books, particularly stories about the black experience," he said. "It helped me to be more compassionate and understanding of other people." It also helped him avoid the call of the streets, where many of his friends met with trouble and tragedy. "Without my getting that associate's degree, I would have stayed on the street, and I would have ended up in jail, too," he said. He eventually served in the Navy and received a B.A. in Fine Arts. LaGuardia, he said, had made it all possible.

Neil Rossman was the founding faculty member of LaGuardia's philosophy program.

In addition to more space and more students, LaGuardia was adding to its already impressive portfolio of grants, receiving awards that were as impressive as the college's enrollment figures. In 1980, on the eve of LaGuardia's 10th anniversary, the college received an astounding $2.8 million in grants from a variety of public and private sources. The figure was close to $2 million the following year—part of the decrease owed to a change of administrations in Washington, with less money flowing from such sources as the National Endowment for the Humanities. The grants ranged from major initiatives—such as funding for programs for the visually and hearing impaired, and money to help integrate critical thought skills into the liberal arts—to smaller projects, allowing professors to pursue subjects of individual interest. One of the largest and most significant grants came from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation, which awarded the college a $200,000 unrestricted grant, which was used to create an Office of Development and to create new courses. LaGuardia was the first community college in the nation to receive a Sloan grant.

The staff of LaGuardia's library in the 1980's.

The larger grants helped LaGuardia solidify its reputation as a leader in the education of non-traditional students, often by employing non-traditional methods. The Division of Continuing

Education used grant money to establish a consortium of eight City University colleges, with LaGuardia as coordinator, in reaching out to the visually and hearing impaired, bringing training, education and opportunities to an often-neglected group. A reminder of LaGuardia's work with the hearing impaired took place during a basketball clinic in the early 1980s, when a group of hearing-impaired young people gathered around Mike Glenn of the New York Knicks. Glenn was fluent in American Sign Language, and used it to communicate the fine art of jump shots and defense to an awestruck audience.

Members of the Computer Information Systems Department in 1986.

In the liberal arts, grant money funded a collaborative project that demonstrated yet again LaGuardia's willingness to break down traditional barriers in pursuit of a broad-based education. Courses in critical thinking were paired with other liberal arts courses, allowing students and faculty alike to share ideas and experiences with each other. "As people develop their thinking skills—their ability to critically understand and effectively solve problems—they increase their understanding of who they are, where they are going, and what their goals are," said Dr. John Chaffee, who co-wrote the successful grant proposal with Dr. Neil Rossman, both professors of philosophy. His summation of critical thought skills was a fair description of part of LaGuardia's founding and guiding ethos—to think, to understand, and to be inspired.

The early years of LaGuardia's second decade were a time when individual faculty members and deans began to set off on new directions with the confidence that comes with success and achievement. Having seen the new college through its early years and gotten through the fiscal crisis, they were ready for new challenges. They believed there had to be something better than simply settling into a familiar, tenured existence. They had not, after all, come to LaGuardia simply to serve their time in the comfortable status quo—not when there was so much work to be had, and an administration as willing as ever to encourage experimentation.

Gilberto Arroyo, one-time chair of the Social Science Department, helped develop courses in Latin American culture and history.

The search for something better resulted in a confederation of initiatives throughout the 1980s. Unlike the carefully planned expansion of the college's early years, the second decade's growth was decentralized, driven by the vision and mission of individual professors and departments.

The development of options in various academic areas allowed faculty members to be ever more creative in putting together curricula, and gave students an opportunity to pick and choose from a series of courses in a particular area of interest. For example, business students were given a chance to develop an option in business finance as part of the management curriculum, while liberal arts students were able to put together an option in Latin American studies.

Latin American studies, in fact, became a popular option as an increasing number of Latino and Latina students —

immigrants and the children of immigrants — flocked to LaGuardia from neighborhoods such as Jackson Heights. Dr. Ana Maria Hernandez in modern foreign languages and Dr. Gilberto Arroyo, a social sciences professor and a onetime chair of the Social Science Department, helped develop the program. "It was a good fit with our student population," Arroyo said.

One of the biggest challenges facing faculty in the fields of accounting and management was the explosive growth of technology in the workplace. The problem was two-fold: Many students entered the classroom overly dependent on calculators and computers, while faculty members sometimes found themselves in quite the opposite dilemma. "When I first came to LaGuardia after working for an accounting firm, many clients still did not have desktop computers," said Kathleen Forestieri, professor and now chair of the Accounting and Management Department. "Years ago, I remember an accounting student asking me if he should take a computer course, and I told him that soon using a computer would be as commonplace as driving a car." Sure enough, the department soon was flooded with high school graduates fluent in the ways of the P.C., but, she recalled, "we [the faculty] had to learn about it ourselves."

Susan Armiger was appointed the first dean of the Division of External Affairs.

As the faculty did so, computers were incorporated into the department's courses, but always with a caveat. "Students had to be taught to think of the computer not as a tool for doing work quicker, but as a way of giving them more information to analyze," Forestieri said. In addition, as technology gave birth to the Internet, faculty worked with students to develop critical thinking skills about the wealth of information available with the click of a mouse. "We had to show them how important it was to be critical of what they found through the Internet, where anybody can say just about anything," Forestieri said.

Members of the Social Science Department in 1988.

The Humanities Department continued its development as an independent department, featuring six academic disciplines — oral communications, visual arts, performance art, philosophy, critical thinking and modern language, each one with a coordinator reporting back to the chair. The growth of the department was such that by the mid-1990s, it was offering 200 sections during the college's 12-week terms. "Our offerings have increased in variation," said Professor Sandra Dickinson, the department's chair. "For example, we now offer introduction to jazz and Latin music and courses in Chinese and Hebrew." The department also developed a series of paired courses with the ESL department, and has developed courses in speech and, in an example of LaGuardia's spirit of innovation and collaboration, performing arts. "Acting is another vehicle for speech, and uses language in a non-threatening way," Dickinson said.

Carol Montgomery joined LaGuardia's faculty in the mid-1980s and went to work

in helping to develop course offerings and programs for students who were not native English speakers—a category of student that grew rapidly through the 1980s. "The big question is at what point can students succeed in courses taught in English," she said. To help the process along, the college built a speech lab in the C Building, where students listened to tapes and had conversations with native English speakers. As the program developed, courses were introduced for students who spoke English in a dialect and for Spanish speakers wishing to brush up on their native language after becoming fluent in English.

Members of the Humanities Department in the late 1980's.

A very popular addition to the Humanities Department was the introduction of a degree program in commercial photography. Now under the direction of Bruce Brooks, the program is considered to be the best of its kind within City University.

In the early 1980s, LaGuardia became one of the first colleges in the nation to use computers to teach basic writing skills. It began as an effort to help dyslexic students. "Our logic was that since keyboarding had long been recognized as a 'bypass strategy' for certain learning disabilities, writing on a computer would combine this advantage with others, like the capacity to work on typical symptoms of learning disabled writing one at a time and the ability to focus hyperactive students on their work," said Dr. Brian Gallagher, one of the founders of the program. But soon Gallagher, Daniel Lynch, Marian Arkin and other instructors realized that the technology could be used to great effect in the general student population. "Computers allowed students to produce three, four or five drafts of a paper very easily," Gallagher noted. "When they had written the drafts by hand, faculty members were lucky to get one genuine draft. It allows you to spend a lot more time fine-tuning a text, and a lot less time rewriting it by hand."

Professor Brian Gallagher of the English Department instructs a writing student with the help of a computer.

During the program's first two to three years, faculty and staff from other colleges across the country stopped by Long Island City to see LaGuardia's writing program in person. "People were very interested, and wanted to know how to create an interface between the classroom and the computer lab," Gallagher said.

The success of these and other programs led to the college establishing a computer lab for the exclusive use of the English Department beginning in 1986. Other professors were trained in the use of the computers, managing to overcome the doubts of some who were somewhat suspicious of those glowing cathode-ray tubes.

The program's impact on dyslexic students was personified in the experience of Ruth Enriquez, who enrolled as a part-time student at LaGuardia in 1987. Her high school record was spotty, and she suffered from very low esteem. She had inquired about attending other colleges, but found they were "very cold," she recalled. At one private university, "I was told to forget it... the woman interviewing me told me to take lesser courses. They made me feel so bad."

The reception at LaGuardia was a great deal more encouraging. She began studying physical therapy at LaGuardia, but soon had problems in her biology class. A concerned professor recommended that she see a counselor, who asked to see her notebooks. Sure enough, Enriquez had dyslexia. "I felt relief," she said. "I felt, 'Okay, I'm not stupid.'" With her condition diagnosed and accounted for, her grades began to climb. She began attending the college full time in 1988, and was graduated in 1991 with a 3.58 grade point average. She went on to get her bachelor's degree at Hunter College. Her success, she said, "made me feel really great. All my life I thought something was wrong with me. Now I have a goal to help people." She credited her professors for "pushing" her to work harder and realize her full potential. She now works as a physical therapist with children.

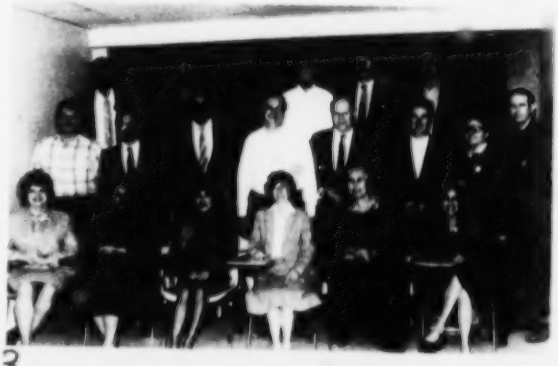
Janet Lieberman, Richard Lieberman and Joseph Shenker at the opening of the Woodside Subway exhibit, 1981.

Computers also allowed the implementation of a program called English Express, an intensive, one-week version of a basic writing course in which students spent eight hours a day for a week writing, thinking about writing, talking about writing, and even writing about writing. The program was offered in the summer as part of a freshman summer immersion program, and was offered between terms to students who had nearly passed the college's basic writing class.

English Express has its counterpart in Math Express, and it similarly made use of computers to assist faculty and students alike. In the late 1980s, thanks to a grant from the state, LaGuardia's faculty developed a thematically linked program of five-week courses for students in need of remediation in writing, reading and mathematics. One of the earliest themes was "Beauty," which directed students to examine beauty in its various manifestations — words, images, even (for basic math students) the beauty of symmetry and ratios.

At first, the formation of what were called Superclusters was constructed around combinations of basic writing, basic reading and basic math. Eventually, the college offered a Supercluster in all three basic skills areas, along with an interdisciplinary course in Liberal Arts and Sciences designed to foster intellectual skills. The latter course brought together faculty members from various academic areas, and the course work was tied to work the students were performing in the basic classes. On occasion, the two sections of "Topics in the Liberal Arts and Sciences" were combined in order to take advantage of an individual faculty member's special expertise. Mathematics teachers sometimes led a discussion on the differences and similarities of math and science, or an English professor analyzed selections of poetry. The attachment of a liberal arts and sciences course to a cluster of basic courses allowed students in developmental classes a chance to explore a world beyond the writing and math lab. It was yet another example of the faculty's creativity and willingness to experiment.

Members of the Accounting and Managerial Studies Department in 1988.



Another innovative approach to basic skills was a

concept called Integrated Skills Reinforcement, or ISR, which was administered by key LaGuardia faculty. Designed to integrate reading, writing and critical thinking into all areas of the college's curriculum, a number of faculty members participated in weekly meetings to discuss how to implement the program in everything from mathematics to accounting classes. Dr. Claire Sit, a mathematics professor, was part of the team conducted by Professor Gil Muller, and she recalled working closely with the English Department on making the match between focusing on basic communications skills as well as standard mathematics lessons. (There was an echo of the past here, of course. In the old days, the basic mathematics course had been called Symbolic Communication.)

Members of the Communications Skills Department circa 1988.

A number of veteran faculty members were involved with the ISR program, including John Holland, Joanne Anderson, Harvey Wiener, Eleanor Q. Tignor, Carol Rivera-Kron, Gil Muller and Nora Eisenberg. "We recruited through the department chairs and got people from all academic areas," said John Holland, a professor in the Communications Skills Department who helped coordinate reading programs as part of ISR. Leaders in various areas would meet with faculty members by themselves and in groups to "show how to work reading, writing, speaking, listening and mathematics into a particular course," Holland recalled.

The emphasis on communications skills made a profound impact on Yolanda Cordero, who started at LaGuardia in 1988 as a 21-year-old part-time student. She found the atmosphere extremely encouraging for students who had to work while attending classes. "The professors were compassionate," she said. "They weren't lenient, don't get me wrong. But they understood your situation." Cordero's breakthrough moment came in a communications class, when her professor "pushed" her to speak in front of the class. "I was nervous," she said, "but I did it anyway." Afterwards, her instructor told her that she would have to get used to speaking in front of people, of asserting herself through spoken words, if she wanted to succeed in the business world. Enough said — "from that day on, I've never been afraid to speak in front of people," she said.

Decades of New York history were represented at the college when Mrs. Marie LaGuardia, joined by President Shenker, met with former Mayors John Lindsay and Abe Beame.

The Communication Skills Department, whose early members included Ira Epstein, John Holland, Francine Brewer, and Hannalyn Wilkens, in collaboration with colleagues from other departments, founded a Basic Skills Task Force that created a program which soon became a national leader. One of the task force's initiatives was a Basic Skills Articulation project, which sought to coordinate reading instruction with writing and speech.

One vast and highly unusual undertaking had its beginnings in the college's philosophical commitment to the people and communities of Queens. During the late 1970s, history professor

Richard Lieberman had begun a community history project, which itself was an outgrowth of LaGuardia's courses in the history of minority groups, neighborhoods, immigration and the city itself. Funded with grants from the National Endowment for the Humanities, Professor Lieberman organized a Public History Program for Queens County that produced pamphlets, exhibitions and discussion groups centered around the social history of LaGuardia's home borough. There were several similar projects wholly or partially underwritten by NEH grants. "It was," Professor Lieberman recalled, "a way of enfranchising people into American history."

Cecilia Cunningham, principal of Middle College High School, in 1983.

From LaGuardia's students came the raw material of untold history. They wrote papers about family history, conducted interviews that served as oral histories, and produced photographs, letters and diaries. A collaborative effort between LaGuardia and the Greater Astoria Historical Society produced a community history calendar entitled "Working People," which won a certificate of special merit in a competition sponsored by the Printing Industries of New York.

The success of LaGuardia's community history projects came at a time when President Shenker was considering ways in which the college could build upon its namesake's legacy during the centennial celebrations of Mayor LaGuardia's birth in 1982. An answer soon presented itself: the collected papers of Mayor LaGuardia. What better place to serve as a repository for the LaGuardia papers than LaGuardia Community College?

The notion of a community college serving as home to a valuable archive certainly was non-traditional, if not downright controversial. In a phrase, community colleges simply weren't in the archival game; that was left for better-known, four-year schools. Indeed, according to Richard Lieberman, who would go on to serve as director of the archives, the very idea received a cold reception in the archive world. "They were against us," Professor Lieberman recalled. "And I think there was a racial undertone to their opposition. At meetings, the buzz words were that we don't need another archive. They'd say: 'What is an archive doing at a community college?' What they were saying was: 'You have a predominately minority student population, you shouldn't be doing this. You should be teaching these kids to be plumbers and electricians.' "

Members of the Natural and Applied Science Department in 1988.

Nevertheless, LaGuardia proceeded with its plan. When Marie LaGuardia agreed to give the college her husband's vast collection of letters, photographs and artifacts, the archives became a reality. In the basement of her Riverdale home, Mrs. LaGuardia had stored hundreds of undiscovered relics of her husband's career covering some 40 years, including unpublished novels and plays, speeches, recordings of radio addresses and more than

4,000 photographs. It was a treasure trove of New York history. Janet Lieberman and the first director of the archives, Thomas Kessner, personally visited Mrs. LaGuardia to pick up the first batch of the Mayor's papers. And on December 9, 1982, the college celebrated both the Mayor's 100th birthday and the opening of the Fiorello H. LaGuardia Archives and Museum with a luncheon at the Sheraton Center Hotel. Among the celebrants were Mrs. LaGuardia and former Mayors John Lindsay and Abe Beame.

Members of the Mathematics Department in the 1980's.

It was to be one of Mrs. LaGuardia's last public appearances. Less than two years after the centennial dinner, Marie LaGuardia died of a heart attack at age 89. It was, quite literally, a death in the college family. "Even with her failing health and her many obligations, she was always available to help in any way she could," said President Shenker. "This wonderful lady was truly part of the college community."

Meanwhile, thanks to heavy media coverage and visits by high-profile journalists, Mrs. LaGuardia's last gift to the college, the LaGuardia Archives, was an immediate success, attracting scholars interested in both LaGuardia himself and the long era of New York history over which he presided. The archives immediately began a cooperative effort with the Municipal Archives to microfilm the LaGuardia collection, thus protecting them from the ravages of time and usage. And, in an immensely satisfying development, the archives expanded to become a vital repository of 20th Century New York history. Through the efforts of City University historians Julius Edelstein and Richard Wade, the papers of New York's Housing Authority—an institution founded during the LaGuardia era —were delivered to the archives. Richard Lieberman, thanks to his work in local history, brought the papers of the Astoria-based Steinway Company, the world's foremost piano-makers.

Janet Lieberman was the guiding force in the development of many of LaGuardia's most innovative initiatives, including the LaGuardia Archives and Middle College High School.

In yet another coup, the archives received the official papers of the city's premier political family, the Wagners, leading to an expansion of the archives. The papers of Senator Robert Wagner and his son, three-term Mayor Robert Wagner, helped tell the story of how New York came to be the capital of the American Century, and their new home helped solidify a relationship between the college and Mayor Wagner's son, the third Robert Wagner to take a leadership role in the life of his city. Robert Wagner Jr., known to nearly everyone as Bobby, had developed a close friendship with President Shenker, and he became one of the college's most influential supporters. It was through Bobby Wagner's efforts that the LaGuardia Archives expanded yet again, this time in the early 1990s, when Mayor Ed Koch donated his voluminous papers to LaGuardia. The Koch donation, an immensely important guide through 12 turbulent years of New York history, helped solidify the LaGuardia-Wagner Archives as one of the most important collections of 20th Century New York history. After Mayor Koch's donation, his predecessor, Abe Beame, also donated his

papers—with their valuable insights into the city's fiscal crisis—to LaGuardia.

The possession of such valuable collections further enhanced LaGuardia's prestige and redefined yet again the role of an urban community college. Fifteen years after the archives were established, they have become a must for any serious scholar of recent New York history, or even of 20th Century American history, for those papers tell an important story not only about New York, but the country as well.

LaGuardia's partnership with Vassar College in the Exploring Transfer Program has been a tremendous success.

Offering challenges and new approaches to students deemed unreachable or fit for only the most prosaic kind of education has been, of course, a LaGuardia trademark. In the early 1980s, one of LaGuardia's boldest initiatives began to win national recognition as a model for the education of urban teenagers long on potential but short on motivation. In an otherwise gloomy report on the state of education in America, the National Commission on Excellence in Education cited Middle College High School as a leader in innovation and creativity in its famous report, *A Nation at Risk*, published in 1983.

Middle College was an integral part of LaGuardia Community College from the moment of its inception in the fall of 1974, when it opened its doors for the first time. As a partnership between the college and the Board of Education, Middle College was designed to suit the needs and talents of high school students who, based on the evaluation of teachers and counselors, were at risk of leaving school before graduation. Middle College was established in part to see if an alternative to a traditional high school setting might help stem the tragic outflow of dropouts not only in New York, but in most urban areas. The dropout rate, estimated at between 40 and 50 percent, not only affected the lives and futures of the students, but it was a challenge to City University's ethos of open admissions. Timothy Healy, the University's deputy chancellor for academic affairs and one of the staunchest advocates of open admissions, remarked that the city's high dropout rate was translating into empty seats throughout CUNY. Healy approached LaGuardia: "You're the newest college," he said. "Do something about the dropout problem."

LaGuardia established Middle College and set out on yet another innovative mission: to recruit prospective students who had a high rate of absenteeism, three or more failing grades, and problems at home. Since "we couldn't change the high schools," Janet Lieberman recalled, "my choice was to show it could be done differently. You take at-risk students, bring them to the campus, get them ready and attract them to higher education."

Members of the Veterans Center in the 1980's.

Among the ways Middle College got students "ready" was intensive, one-on-one counseling as part of the curriculum. Another one of Middle College's most innovative features was its size. It was designed to serve about 450 students at a time when the city Board of Education still was building factory-model high schools. One of LaGuardia's first students, Peter

Matturro, attended nearby Newtown High School, among the city's largest. "If you weren't already an excellent student, you got lost in a school that big," he said. A smaller school meant that nobody would get lost, at least not because of sheer numbers, which meant that Middle College would have the perpetual atmosphere and spirit of community that LaGuardia itself had during its early years. Middle College was one of the earliest examples of what later became a trend in high school education: a move away from the impersonal toward a smaller, more humanistic learning environment.

The Cooperative Education Division in 1988.

The culture of the school was a reflection of its close ties with LaGuardia. "The school actually is a hybrid," noted Dr. Cecilia Cunningham, principal of Middle College since the early 1980s. "It combines the culture of a community college with that of a conventional high school. The authoritarian structure in conventional high schools doesn't exist here. The structure is more like the college."

Another way in which Middle College replicated the LaGuardia experience was its mandatory internship program, which contained many elements of the college's cooperative education program. Students were placed in a wide variety of positions, mostly in community service work in government agencies or not-for-profit institutions. A study of the internship program found that it was a "critically significant" reason for Middle College's success, noting that for many students, "the work experience is the first school-related success" of their academic careers.

Governor Mario Cuomo was the speaker at International High School's graduation ceremonies in 1988. With him are International's principal Eric Nadelstern and Middle College Principal Cecilia Cunningham.

Through recruitment in local junior high schools, LaGuardia soon began receiving 600 applications a year, from which about 140 students were chosen for admission. To be sure, the school was not designed for everybody—students with limited English proficiency and special education needs were not accepted, nor were those who were thought unlikely candidates for a high school in a college setting. No students, however, were refused because of academic deficiencies. In fact, a study undertaken in 1979 showed that 53 percent of Middle College's students were more than two years behind in their mathematics skills and some 40 percent were two years behind in reading skills. In addition, 40 percent of the student body came from families receiving public assistance.

Yet these students, who might otherwise have opted out of education by the age of 15 or so, soon proved that Middle College was onto something. Hundreds took advantage of an option to take tuition-free college courses at LaGuardia. The breaking down of yet another set of barriers, this one between high school and college, also took place at a faculty level, with Middle College faculty taking advantage of the college's facilities and equipment, while the college's faculty had a chance to better understand high school preparation of their future students. Some Middle School teachers served as adjuncts at LaGuardia, while LaGuardia faculty taught Middle School

students who opted to take college-level classes. And the spirit of questioning the tried and true, another hallmark at LaGuardia, guided the faculty at Middle College. To cite but one example, an American History curriculum that traditionally was taught as a chronological narrative was broken in component parts (Foreign Policy, Government and the Constitution) and taught in themes.

Mayor Koch attended opening ceremonies for the college's Taxi Institute.

With a retention rate of 85 percent, a graduation rate of 90 percent and 78 percent of its seniors going on to college, Middle College soon was receiving attention from school reformers across the country. "The loud and clear message is not whether students are going to go on college, but where," said Dr. Cunningham. "The message is that these students are important." *Newsday* named Middle College its High School of the Year in 1983, and a Carnegie Report on high schools cited Middle College as a national model. *The New York Times* cited the school as "one of the best examples of a high school and a college merging their efforts," and it won recognition from the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

With recognition came requests to replicate Middle College's success throughout the country. And to oblige those requests, the Ford Foundation designated a grant of $276,000 to LaGuardia to provide the funds the college needed to assist six other colleges in developing collaborative high schools modeled after Middle College. The grant was precedent-setting, for it was the first time the Foundation funded such an effort. Dr. Cunningham noted that the grant put "a major stamp of approval on the school."

That the stamp of approval came from the prestigious Ford Foundation was further evidence that LaGuardia had become a leader in innovative higher education. The 1980s saw the Foundation take a special interest in LaGuardia—the Foundation's president, Franklin A. Thomas, was the college's keynote speaker at its 12th annual commencement exercises in 1984. In a rare appearance at such a gathering, Thomas called LaGuardia "the model for a new generation of urban community colleges." The praise was no mere platitude, for shortly after Thomas' speech, the Foundation announced two major grants to LaGuardia. The first, for $225,000, was earmarked to develop a program to encourage minority students to transfer to four-year institutions upon their graduation from community colleges. The program was conceived by Janet Lieberman. The second award, for $50,000, was designed to help pay for the microfilming of material in the LaGuardia Archives.

Members of the Office Technology Department in the 1980's.

The transfer grant was the culmination for a long process for which 360 urban community colleges were eligible. Seventy-one were invited to submit grants, 24 received initial grants, and five, including LaGuardia, received the major awards. The Foundation called the program its "most comprehensive effort to date on behalf of urban community colleges." It came at a time when

LaGuardia was beginning to work with Vassar College in upstate Poughkeepsie on a transfer program of its own, a process that would culminate in the innovative program known as "Exploring Transfer." Once established in 1985, the program allowed 25 to 30 students to spend five weeks during the summer on the Vassar campus, taking Vassar courses that were team taught by Vassar and LaGuardia faculty.

New York Governor Mario Cuomo with President Shenker during the 1980s.

The new emphasis on transfer forced LaGuardia to re-examine itself and its basic mission. Was it a two-year institution in the traditional sense, set up to serve students who already had a foot in the labor market? Or was it a link in the education chain between high school and four-year colleges? Or could it be, in fact, both? A debate broke out among administrators and faculty over exactly how the college saw itself in light of the new push to increase the number of students choosing more education over immediate entry into the work force. Eventually, the debate was settled in a compromise. "We could be a two-year institution and an institution for transfer," said Lieberman, who started the Vassar program. Once that issue was settled, the Ford Foundation stepped in again with a $100,000 grant awarded to Lieberman, Roy McLeod, Arthur Greenberg, Max Rodriguez and Gilbert Muller in 1989 to expand the Vassar program and other transfer opportunities.

Elsewhere on LaGuardia's campus, the signs of growth were as ubiquitous as the classroom and office changes that seemed so much a part of the college's expansion. A well-received advertising campaign designed by Bill Freeland helped spread LaGuardia's message across the region. "Building New York, One Mind at a Time," read one of the campaign's slogans. Another indicated that LaGuardia's had ambitions beyond political borders: "Come to LaGuardia and See the World." That was no idle promise. LaGuardia's vice president, Martin Moed, Dean of Continuing Education Judith McGaughey and Professors Carol Montgomery and Fernando Santamaria traveled to mainland China as part of an exchange program sponsored by City University and Shanghai University. Students, too, set out to see the world as part of their studies—LaGuardia set up an international exchange program with colleges in Colombia, West Germany, Paris and Dublin. Like LaGuardia itself, the schools in the exchange program were career-oriented institutions.

Walter Mondale visited the college during his presidential campaign.

Meanwhile, Dean McGaughey's portfolio—the Department of Continuing Education—was proving itself to be one of the college's biggest drawing cards, both on campus and off. The department's expansion was tailored to data collected from a massive needs-assessment study that the college undertook in the early 1980s. From the study, based on responses from people in the community, "we found out what kind of career information the adults needed, and we

found out, for example, that many people didn't have a general equivalency diploma and that there was a need for extra-curricular activities for children in the area," said Fern Khan. Beginning in 1982, the Division began an expansion that took LaGuardia into neighborhoods such as Astoria and Chinatown, with courses designed for the needs and demands of individual communities.

The Astoria Center for Adult Education was LaGuardia's first permanent off-campus center, opening in June of 1982 with 120 students. Among the classes offered were bookkeeping, aerobic dancing and home repair. And, in a community home to thousands of immigrants, the center offered three classes in English as a Second Language. All were booked to capacity. The Astoria Center grew to serve 1,000 students annually.

President Shenker awards the Presidential Medal to Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro.

A year after its incursion into Astoria, Continuing Education established the Chinatown Center, which offered ESL classes as well as bilingual classes in sociology, psychology and statistics. "When we started the Chinatown Center, it was because students and community people came to us," said Dean McGaughey. "They had heard about LaGuardia because of its co-op reputation, and within the community there were workers from the garment district and in local restaurants who didn't have the time to travel to Long Island City." So Long Island City, in the form of LaGuardia's Chinatown Center, came to them.

While the continuing education departments at most colleges and universities focus on adult learners, LaGuardia recognized no such limits. The College for Children was founded in 1983 to provide learners as young as six with an assortment of cultural and educational offerings on Saturdays. Among the most popular classes were those given in computer instruction, this at a time when the personal computer industry was just beginning to take hold. Under the direction of Ms. Khan, the College for Children provided the youngest learners with an inexpensive introduction to learning, LaGuardia style.

Not everything Continuing Education embarked on was the result of a careful needs assessment. One particular need, in fact, made itself known when Mayor Koch returned from a trip abroad and decided that New York City needed to better prepare its taxi drivers. From that pronouncement came a commission that recommended an institute be established to train New York cabbies. LaGuardia volunteered the services of Continuing Education, and the New York Taxi Institute at the college was born in 1983, with a mission to provide a largely immigrant work force with an introduction into the sometimes bumpy profession of taxi-driving. A 20-hour course was developed as part of the licensing process.

The Institute was an example, President Shenker said, of LaGuardia working in cooperation with the needs of elected officials—who, in the end, decide things like total budgets for taxpayer-supported institutions of higher learning. "This was

LaGuardia responding to something the Mayor wanted," Shenker recalled. "And the next time LaGuardia needed something from the mayor, we wouldn't go in cold. We could say: 'A year ago you had a problem, now we have a problem, can you help us?'" That attitude was emblematic of LaGuardia's relations with the political leadership of Queens. "The agenda was not to seek out elected officials but to develop a relationship with the ability of LaGuardia to serve them," Shenker said.

Folk singer Pete Seeger during a performance in the college theater.

Throughout the 1980s, as word spread of LaGuardia's work, prominent elected officials came to see for themselves. The parade of visitors included a pair of nationally known politicians who also happened to be LaGuardia's neighbors: Queens Congresswoman Geraldine Ferraro and Governor Mario Cuomo, a native and longtime resident of the borough. Representative Ferraro received the President's Medal at the college's commencement exercises in 1982, two years before she made history as the first woman nominated for national office, while the Governor, who skyrocketed to national attention at the same convention that nominated Ms. Ferraro, dropped by to address an audience of 100 deaf students. As an interpreter translated his words into sign language, the Governor said: "This college reflects education at its best. The college is doing the job of removing impediments and doing it marvelously well."

Given that Congresswoman Ferraro and Governor Cuomo visited LaGuardia, it made for a certain kind of symmetry that former vice president Walter Mondale also stopped by the campus during his unsuccessful presidential campaign in 1984. LaGuardia could brag that the three leading figures at the Democratic National Convention in 1984 had been on campus, with Mondale's visit attracting the most attention. With the national press corps recording every move, Mondale donned a white smock and dropped by the school's dietary technician's lab—a picture of the former vice president mixing it up with LaGuardia's students appeared on the next day's front page of *The New York Times*. During a short presentation in the college's music room, Mondale told students and the national media that "I want to restore America's competitiveness. That's why I wanted to stop at LaGuardia today. What you are doing here is a model for what should be occurring all over this nation."

The National Theater of the Deaf performs at LaGuardia.

Ketley Paul, a 25-year-old immigrant from Haiti who chose LaGuardia because she heard it was a good college for working women, was among the students who had a chance to see Mondale. She recalled going from room to room, telling her friends that she had seen the would-be President. Had Paul met the candidate, she might have told him a story he could have used on the campaign trail: She had come to America unable to speak English, and now LaGuardia was giving her an opportunity to find out more about the world and about herself. A course in African American studies made a deep impression on her as she and her fellow students took field trips to Harlem and other centers of African-American culture in New York.

"I didn't know about the struggle of Black American people," she said. Eventually, Paul received her degree from LaGuardia and went on to get a bachelor's degree from Albany State. She is now a high school teacher in the city Board of Education. "I tell the students about LaGuardia," she said. "I tell them they should never give up."

Franklin A. Thomas, president of the Ford Foundation, was keynote speaker at the 1984 graduation.

It was fitting that Mondale's visit included a stop at the dietary technician's lab, because the most explosive growth at the college in the mid-1980s took place in the allied health field. Long before the national dialogue focused on health care, LaGuardia anticipated the emergence of a new, highly technical health-care industry that would provide thousands of jobs. Though the sciences always were a vital part of the school's curriculum, LaGuardia's traditional emphasis had been on business and human services. With the labor market about to change, however, LaGuardia moved quickly to respond to new demands. Students with majors in applied science leaped from 677 in 1983 to 1,610 in 1987.

Programs in such fields as occupational therapy, mortuary science and animal health technology already had been put into place when the college announced the addition of a nutrition care program and a two-year nursing program. The latter program would prove to be one of the college's most popular additions as the nursing shortage of the 1980s created a demand for a program that had been non-existent in the 1970s.

Kathleen Mulryan, a professor of nursing, noted that the program brought to LaGuardia a new generation of students looking for a chance to step into the middle class. "By the late 1980s, we had students who were on welfare, who had very complicated home relationships, and they got through our program and went from having nothing but determination to having a $42,000-a-year job in two years," Mulryan said. "We were taking people below the poverty level and empowering them with the ability to enter a profession."

John Bihn helps a student in the science program.

Indeed, the nursing program became so popular—the number of pre-nursing students jumped from 171 to 387 from 1985 to 1987—that LaGuardia was left with little choice but to set up admissions requirements, something George Hamada, then chairman of the Department of Natural and Applied Sciences, was loathe to do. "We were being swamped (with admissions)," he said. "We were oversubscribed by two or three times. There was tremendous pressure to get into the program, so we had to set up an admissions criteria. I was against it personally because it went against the fundamental approach of open admissions. But it had to be done. There was nothing we could do about it."

In the case of the nursing program, whatever philosophical problems admissions

standards posed, they were overwhelmed by the simple fact that hospitals associations were demanding a careful selection process for nursing students. Students were required to take classes in four subject areas: Chemistry, Anatomy, English and Psychology.

Professor Roberta Matthews team teaching in the American Social History Program.

The demand for a nursing education ebbed as the health-care industry changed in the 1990s, and with those changes came adjustments for faculty members. Something as basic as teaching students how to bathe a patient or dispose of items that come in contact with blood required a change in instruction methodology. "We used to teach these skills in a lab setting," Mulryan noted. "But now, with the expansion of visiting nurse services, we've become more conscious that our students may be working outside of a hospital setting. We have to have the experience and content to help them get ready."

The changes in health care also have led to a new emphasis on transfer in the nursing program. "We tell students that this should be the beginning of their education," Mulryan said.

Additional programs were added throughout the 1980s as health sciences grew in popularity. Programs in physical therapy and emergency medical technology were added and new laboratories were built to suit the demands of new courses. Eventually, LaGuardia gained a reputation as a major center for training in health-care fields, becoming what Hamada called "the place" in New York for training in occupational therapy, physical therapy and animal health technology. "We have a niche that is unique in the city," Hamada said.

The same could be said of any number of other programs. One of the most unique, a symbol of LaGuardia's continued commitment to bringing education to all sectors of society, was a one-of-a-kind job training program specifically geared for homeless adults living in hotel rooms, seemingly abandoned by society. LaGuardia took them in and helped them rebuild their lives through a twice-a-week program that not only taught the homeless job skills, but also provided free child care and transportation. Like so many of the college's other initiatives, the homeless program was a reflection of the spirit that had motivated LaGuardia's founders in those early years, when all they had was a warehouse, a few desks and a world of idealism.

The college's 225-seat theater also made its debut in the 1980s, and among its earliest shows was an all-day celebration of working people featuring folk singer Pete Seeger. Within a few years after opening, the theater became a major cultural asset not only to the college, but the community at large. From student-acted dramatic productions to classical music concerts to performances by the Little Theater for the Deaf, the theater served to enrich the lives of students and neighbors alike. By the late 1980s, the theater was serving as

home to two student productions a year under the leadership of Humanities Professor John H. Williams, a former church musician who also led the college's choral society. The growing importance of the arts at LaGuardia, Williams said, demonstrated the college's commitment to providing a well-rounded education that went beyond the purely vocational. "Yes, there was co-op, but we wanted to give students a broader experience," he said.

Change, it seemed, was a permanent fixture at LaGuardia. The addition of new programs, the expansion and renovation of campus facilities, and even the juggling of classroom and office space gave the college the look and feel of a perpetual work in progress.

In another setting, the constant changes and frequent expansions might have made for chaos. But at LaGuardia, there was one important stabilizing factor. From beginning to maturity, the college had known only one president: Joseph Shenker. He took the college from drawing board to reality and beyond. But in 1988, he decided his work at LaGuardia was done. He had been named president of the college in April 1970, and he resigned in July of 1988 to assume the presidency of Bank Street College of Education. It was, by all accounts, a remarkable tenure.

Taking the reins as Acting President was Martin Moed, LaGuardia's Vice President and a founder of the school who had taken on key roles in overseeing the college's growth during the 1980s. During his year-long tenure, Acting President Moed presided over two critical developments, only one of which was cause for celebration.

On November 16, 1988, he picked up a shovel and, amid pomp and ceremony, broke ground to kick off an $87 million renovation of the Equitable Bag building adjacent to the college's Main Building. The new building, which eventually would become the college's E Building, would give the school 350,000 additional square feet, along with a new, 800-seat theater, a new library and more classroom space. "With this new building, we will move into the next century with a building that can meet the needs of many more people in our city," he said.

Acting President Martin Moed and dignitaries break ground for the E Building.

Not long after the work began on LaGuardia's newest facility, the ghost of the mid-1970s returned to campus. The acting president found himself dealing with yet another fiscal crisis, forcing a round of budget briefings and meetings that had only slightly less urgency than those of the suddenly not-so-distant past. Hard times, it seemed clear, were here again.

It was in this atmosphere of renewed crisis, and renewed growth, that LaGuardia Community College started out on a new beginning.

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LAGUARDIA
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE/CUNY
1971-1996
A Tradition of
Innovation
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CHAPTER FIVE

New Beginnings

Of the many changes that Raymond Bowen noticed when he returned to LaGuardia's campus after an absence of more than a decade, one transformation in particular leaped out at him. When he left LaGuardia in the mid-1970s, a majority of students were white. Now, as he prepared to assume office as LaGuardia Community College's second president, he saw that a majority of the school's students were members of minority groups. In fact, in 1989, 37 percent of LaGuardia's students were Latino, 27 percent were African American, 17 percent were white and 13 percent were Asian. These were, Dr. Bowen thought, the new kids on the block, and this school had the look of America in the 21st Century.

It was an appropriate theme for the man who would take the school into that new century. The journey that took him to Long Island City for the second time in his career had begun in the projects of New Haven, Connecticut, where he was a self-described "New Deal kid conditioned by the rigors of the Depression era." He saw in the faces of LaGuardia's students an image of himself as a young, ambitious African-American student with an affinity for the sciences. At an early age, he envisioned a career for himself as a scientist. But when confessed his ambitions to his high school biology teacher, he was informed, brutally, that he would do better with a shoeshine box. "There are no Negro scientists," he was told. He proved his teacher wrong, but it wasn't easy. As an undergraduate at the University of

A new era in LaGuardia's history began when Raymond Bowen was inaugurated as the college's second president on September 18, 1990.

Connecticut in the early 1950s, he was one of 20 African-Americans in a student body of 13,000.

He came back to LaGuardia intent on doing what he could to rectify these sorts of injustices, and to see to it that today's ambitious students, so often burdened with troubles that made his own and those of his friends seem innocent by comparison, found the college a nurturing, familiar place. LaGuardia, of course, always had a reputation for its diversity and its commitment to minority students and all underserved learners. Now, however, that mission was to take on a new urgency and importance. "My personal challenge," he wrote, "was not only to maintain LaGuardia's reputation but to move the college to even greater heights."

President Bowen and Governor Cuomo at awards ceremony in 1992.

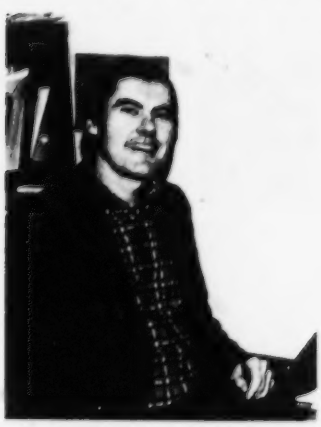
LaGuardia's traditional mission was not going to change. It was going to expand.

To be sure, it seemed as though everything except LaGuardia's mission had changed since Bowen's days as dean of academic affairs during LaGuardia's formative years. The college where he and other faculty members seemed to know every student by name had grown to become a large and bureaucratic institution of higher learning that served more than 9,000 full-time students and thousands more who were enrolled in LaGuardia's ever-growing Continuing Education programs. The Main Building looked nothing like it had when Bowen left it in the mid-1970s, and there were programs and majors nobody had thought of all those years ago.

By the same token, though, it would have been understandable if, even with all the changes, Bowen experienced a sense of deja vu as he familiarized himself with the LaGuardia that had taken shape since he left 14 years ago. Back then, the school was on the verge of a fiscal crisis; now, one of his first duties was to deal with a new round of budget cuts and dire fiscal predictions. When he left, the anarchy of construction was very much a part of the LaGuardia experience. Now, as he walked the hallways of the school he was to lead, he heard yet again the clatter of construction as work continued on the former Equitable building next door to the Main Building.

John Hyland, who chaired the Social Science Department, was part of the college's founding faculty.

Still, of all the changes Bowen saw, he could not get over the transformation of the student body. The students not only were from diverse racial backgrounds; many were part of the huge, new immigration that had transformed Queens into an astonishing polyglot of cultures, races and nationalities. The Number 7 train that rumbled by LaGuardia's campus was nothing if not a journey into multicultural America, a ride that could take you to bits of South Korea, the Dominican Republic, Nigeria, Colombia, Poland, Greece, Guatemala and dozens of other countries. Understandably, then, cultural pluralism was to become a watchword for the new Bowen administration.



The new students were like Lily Yadegar, an Iranian immigrant who saw LaGuardia as "an opportunity to start a new life — an opportunity to learn." Yadegar, who received her degree from the college in 1989, had come to America when she was 17. Speaking of herself and many of her fellow students, she said: "You don't know the language, the culture.

You don't know what to do and where to go. LaGuardia offered me the chance to learn about American culture and about the city."

Before the new president took over the assignment of leading the diverse institution LaGuardia had become, there was a bit of history to record and memorialize. Joseph Shenker returned to LaGuardia on August 28, 1989, just three days before Bowen took over. At a special ceremony, the former president's portrait was unveiled, and the man himself received the gratitude of the staff and faculty. The ceremony marked the official end of LaGuardia's first administration.

On September 1, 1989, the college's second administration officially began. Bowen's appointment and homecoming of sorts came after he had served seven years as president of Shelby State College in Memphis, Tennessee, where he had been honored in 1982 as the city's outstanding educator. He won the praise of the chairman of City University's chairman of the Board of Trustees, James Murphy, who said the new president would serve "with distinction and purpose."

George Hamada, a founding faculty member, became Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.

Known as an affable man and a first-rate scientist, Bowen brought to LaGuardia not only a long career in scholarship and administration, but a clear vision of his role as LaGuardia's leader. Early on, he explained to a reporter why he chose a career in education: "I think it's imperative that minorities become part of the mainstream, and the way to do that is through education." He also understood that in order for LaGuardia to continue to prepare its students for jobs, it must adapt to an economy that was very different from that of the early days in Long Island City.

Bowen's inauguration in September, 1990 — a year after his appointment — established the concerns he would emphasize as his chapter in LaGuardia's history unfolded. The themes of Opening Sessions in 1990 were cultural pluralism and economic development. To help achieve the former, a task force on pluralism on campus and a workshop on pluralism in the curriculum met the day after Bowen's official installation on Sept. 19, 1990. Bowen had made his intentions clear: Cultural pluralism was to take a prominent place throughout the curriculum and was to be an important part of restructuring the college's administration. "We decided to infuse cultural pluralism into everything we do," the new President said. "Diversity already was here, now we wanted to make it part of the school's mission."

Shirley Saulsbury was appointed assistant dean and executive associate to the president.

There certainly was no denying the diversity on campus. In a paper they delivered on learning communities, LaGuardia's Roberta Matthews and Daniel Lynch recalled several scenarios from the classroom: "Students introduce themselves on the first day of the new semester: 'My father is Dominican and my mother is from Haiti, but they're divorced, so sometimes I live with one and sometimes the other. I'm thinking about moving in with my girlfriend and our son. She's from the Philippines.' Again, one student might say she's Greek,

and so might another, but the first is a just-arrived Cypriot young woman from a hillside village and the other is third-generation from nearby Astoria into trash rock with a buzz cut and some major tattoos."

LaGuardia accomplished President Bowen's mandate to implement cultural pluralism in short order, adjusting the curriculum in a mere 18 months during a time a severe budget cuts. Other colleges took years and spent millions of dollars in pursuit of similar goals.

Richard Elliott was appointed Dean of Administration.

Bowen understood, however, that the college — and the neighborhood — could not live on pluralism alone, not with the economy and the labor force changing so rapidly. So a new, creative approach to training and career preparation also was given an important priority as LaGuardia embarked on a new beginning. "With the downsizing of all these corporations, we've really got to start emphasizing entrepreneurship," Bowen said. "Why should we be spending our time teaching students the corporate structure instead of how to start your own business, or how to become a sub-contractor for a larger business?" The corporate structure wasn't what it used to be, and LaGuardia's students in the 21st Century very likely would not be spending their careers with a single, large corporate entity, he explained. They would have to be flexible and should understand that the market might lead them in a dozen directions during the course of their careers. Knowledge of the corporate structure would do them no good in a world where such structures were breaking down.

In tandem with a change in LaGuardia's approach to training, Bowen saw the college becoming an engine for economic development in the neighborhood, working with local business organizations to stimulate economic activity and create jobs. "Most community colleges are set up in a particular area and they help existing businesses," he said. "But what about having the college create new businesses?"

Larry Rushing of the Social Science Department served as director of the LaGuardia/Vassar Summer Program.

The two goals for LaGuardia's new beginning, then, would be pluralism and economic development. The challenge he posed to the school was this: "How do you infuse both of these goals? You talk about the global economy. Well, here we have students from 100 countries, and we have ideas from the Pacific Rim and Africa and Carribean. How do we take what they bring to us and amalgamate it into the curriculum, and thus prepare these students for the 21st Century?"

In many ways, the questions he was asking and the challenges he was posing were variations on the questions and challenges that had faced LaGuardia in 1971 and that had faced the Free Academy in the 1840s. How do you capitalize on the strengths of an underserved population and design a curriculum that responds to their needs and their dreams? To be sure, the challenge facing LaGuardia's next quarter-century is the challenge of 21st Century America, but such challenges would have resonated with the eager young faculty who assembled at LaGuardia for the first time in the summer of 1971.

As the new president of a college that had received a great deal of attention in its short history, Bowen quickly found himself enjoying the double-edged sword of New York's media spotlight. New Yorkers were informed that he drove a very unpresidential 1985 Ford Escort and that his idea of getting away from it all, if only for a few hours, was puttering around his basement with tools in hand, building furniture and restoring antiques while listening to his favorite jazz musicians.

His onetime colleagues and co-workers soon learned that while the man they knew as an innovative educator during LaGuardia's first few years remained committed to LaGuardia's tradition of experimentation and creativity, Bowen intended to uphold another tradition: He left people alone to do their work. One tradition, however, came to an end in September, 1992, when the college was forced to scrap its innovative quarterly academic calendar and revert to the traditional two-semester version. The change was enormous, and it touched off a department-by-department evaluation of course offerings. The change also had an enormous impact on the co-op program, which was designed around the quarterly calendar. Co-op was forced to make another adjustment in September, 1996, when the University, in a budget-cutting move, lowered the number of credits required for an associate's degree from 66 to 60. As a result LaGuardia had to lower the number of required co-op credits from nine to six.

The English Department in the late 1980's.

Before tackling the problems and challenges looming on the horizon, President Bowen at least had the chance to preside over a happy occasion in one of his first public functions as LaGuardia's new leader. On October 20, 1989, Dr. Bowen and others gathered at 45-35 Van Dam Street to dedicate the building housing Middle College as the Marie LaGuardia Building. A remembrance of the Mayor's widow was delivered by Dr. Katherine LaGuardia, Fiorello and Marie's grandchild. It was a fine way to honor LaGuardia Community College's new beginning.

Clearly, though, the immediate task at hand was not particularly joyful. With the collapse of the stock market in October, 1987, the financial community began shedding jobs by the tens of thousands, and those who remained saw their bonuses and perks cut. The go-go 1980s, a time when the city and state were overflowing with cash thanks to a building boom and economic revival, were over. By 1989, public higher education once again was being led to the budgetary chopping block. While LaGuardia's continued success in grant-writing (grant money more than doubled, from $2.4 million to $5 million, between 1985 and 1990) helped cushion the blows, it was clear early on in Bowen's administration that hard times had come again.

Sandra Hanson chaired the English Department in the 1990's.

The cuts this time were not as vast and broad as those in the mid-1970s, but they were particularly brutal in an area LaGuardia had distinguished itself—remediation. Battered by budgetary demands and a broader attack on the very idea of remediation in higher education, City University began to withdraw funds for such

programs, and by the 90's basic skills classes no longer counted for credit, which affected students' ability to receive financial aid.

The budget crisis cut severely into LaGuardia's basic skills programs, a critical component in reaching out to the large number of students who needed help in some basic area of learning. The college's Writing Center, which played a vital role in preventing dropouts, was forced to absorb a 25 percent cut. Class size in basic writing courses grew to 28 at a time when experts recommended no more than 15 per class. Microcomputer labs for basic writing also were slashed, as were labs for basic reading. (During the 1990-91 academic year, 54 students who requested individual help with reading had to be turned away because of a lack of resources.) These depressing developments led faculty members to point out that when LaGuardia won national recognition for its basic skills program, the school had a separate dean and task force for basic skills. The demands of fiscal austerity, however, had changed all that, even if the needs were just as compelling as ever.

When Mathematics Professor Assad Thompson was in high school, he used a slide rule. Now he is using computers as a learning tool in the classroom.

Still, LaGuardia found room to grow and energy to revitalize its founding spirit. In the Social Sciences Department chaired by Dr. Lily Shohat, faculty members developed a pre-ed program with Queens College and also a new concentration in community and labor organizing, an interdisciplinary program designed to link students to careers as professional organizers for community groups and labor unions. "There's a recognition that part of the mission of City University is to develop the city's future leadership," said Lorraine Cohen, a professor of social science. "There's a sense that the University and the college can make a positive change in society, and we're trying to make that possible."

The setting up gates, or, in the eyes of some, barriers, to any program in an aggressively democratic institution such as City University was bound to touch off controversy. There were similar misgivings when LaGuardia instituted an honors program in the 1980s, with some faculty and administrators arguing that a separate track for gifted students was antithetical to the college's and the university's egalitarian tradition. Advocates, however, argued that ability and talent ought to be recognized. As Professor Reitano stated in an article, "Articulation and transfer have become major concerns for community colleges throughout the country.... The idea of honors now dovetailed with a desire to give both our liberal arts and our career students more credibility in the academic marketplace."

Professor Jorge Perez took over as chair of the Mathematics Department in the mid-1990s.

The college's branch of the Professional Staff Congress, the faculty union, reflected the determination to re-capture the spirit of LaGuardia's founding principles, even (or especially) in the face of growing criticism from a new generation of politicians and policymakers. The New Caucus under the campus leadership of John Hyland, consisting of faculty union activists who favored more aggressive tactics in preserving City University's traditional mission, dominated LaGuardia's rank and file.

Meanwhile, the Humanities Department, under the leadership of Sandra Dickinson, developed programs in fine arts and in bilingual education. The fine arts program, which started in the Fall of 1996, started with 30 majors and is expected to grow to 120. The interest level in the program is yet another indication of the wide range of interest among LaGuardia students. "There's also a shift in emphasis," said Professor Peter Brown. "Many more students are not getting arts training in high school, so they are looking for it when they come here."

The growth of such courses in art history and other liberal arts offerings offered a counter-point to critics of public community colleges who increasingly asserted that students ought to receive a narrow, vocation-based education. To such critics, a fine arts program, to cite just one example, is a frill community colleges could do without. At LaGuardia, however, faculty members demonstrate on a daily basis the importance of programs that broaden students' horizons, that teach them how to think and that make them better-informed citizens. "We want to make our students active learners," said Denise Carter, a mathematics professor.

Dean Judith McGaughey presided over the rapid growth of the Adult and Continuing Education Division.

LaGuardia also set out make teachers more active learners. The Teacher Sabbatical Program was founded to re-energize the creativity and skills of veteran New York City public school teachers during their sabbaticals. For LaGuardia's faculty, the teacher-students represented yet another new challenge. Many came to LaGuardia in hopes of renewing their energy and enthusiasm for the often-thankless task of educating the city's public school students.

They were not disappointed. The college's faculty put together a 16-credit program with a wide variety of course offerings, from visual arts to urban studies to Spanish language and culture to computers. "The idea is to get the teachers reattached to their creative instincts," said Professor Peter Brown, one of LaGuardia's faculty members who instruct the public school teachers. "It's not a therapy program, but we hope they return to teaching with a new sense of mission." Max Rodriguez, another faculty member involved in the program, noted that public school teachers who work with Hispanic students and their parents find the program's courses in Spanish language and culture especially valuable. Professor Rodriguez has led groups to Costa Rica to examine the culture and society of Latin America, the ancestral homeland or actual birthplace of many of LaGuardia's students.

Professor Andrew Berry with LaGuardia's award-winning math team.

In January, 1998, a group of public school teachers will travel to Venice under the auspices of LaGuardia's program. The courses they'll study in Italy — the city's contributions to art, literature, society and technology — will make the beginning of the college's "Cultures of the World" series.

Meanwhile, the Accounting and Managerial Studies Department, which saw a leveling off of students majoring in business fields, encouraged faculty to refine its pedagogical techniques, something it hardly had time for during the rush of students interest and technological change in the 1970s and '80s. "In

areas like accounting or principles of management, we had 50 years of pedagogy to back us up," said Professor Avis Anderson. "But no pedagogical techniques had been developed to introduce students to computers." The business faculty found itself teaching students who were much more sophisticated in computer use than they had been in the 1980s. "Back then," Professor Anderson recalled, "when students were beginning to learn word processing, they were fascinated. Now, of course, they come to college expecting us to have the latest software and Internet management tools." As a result, she said, business faculty members were constantly looking for the next new thing, the next big advance, that would keep them—and their students—ahead of the field.

"Keeping up with the changes is a full-time job itself," said Professor Donald Davidson of the Computer Information Systems Department. "Between reading about what's new and teaching courses, I sleep about four hours a night." Professor Davidson, who was present at the creation of the college and has seen breathtaking changes in technology and ways of doing business, spent nearly a dozen years as chair of City University's Computer Policy Committee, overseeing computer curricula throughout the University. And for most of those years, it seems fair to suggest that he was one of the few computer wizards in CUNY who came to work every day on a motorcycle.

NASA students with Professor James Frost.

In the 1990s, LaGuardia is renewing its commitment to its urban studies curriculum. The timing was appropriate as thousands of immigrants and the children of immigrants came to LaGuardia. These new New Yorkers were hungry for information and context about their adopted home town, and the college was committed to providing both. Eventually, 25 urban studies classes were sprinkled throughout the curriculum, and all are designed to accommodate field trips to historic sites and civic centers. In recent years, students have visited the Empire State Building, Ellis Island, Theodore Roosevelt's home in midtown Manhattan and a variety of other sites rich in New York history. For example, Professor Lawrence Rushing of the Social Science Department, who also has been active in the Vassar transfer program and the college's honor programs, has taken students on tours of Harlem. LaGuardia is the only community college in the country to include an urban studies class as part of its graduation requirement.

Of course, LaGuardia itself served as a laboratory in the realities confronting urban institutions in the 1990s. Overall, LaGuardia adjusted to the fiscal limitations of the 1990s in a number of ways. One popular and successful innovation was the redesign of the "superclusters," in which a basic writing course served as a common thread binding together courses in basic reading and basic mathematics. The result was an almost instant increase in the number of students passing each component course. Thematic, multidisciplinary learning communities—an area in which LaGuardia had been a pioneer—took on new importance as the school sought to allow students to take college-level classes while working on their basic skills. For example, developmental mathematics classes were linked with introductory computer classes.

One area that held out much promise for innovation in the face of fiscal adversity was learning communities. In their study of LaGuardia's emphasis on collaborative learning, Professors Matthews and Lynch noted that such an approach can "support and move forward the democratic agenda" and "help us forge community out of difference." Professor Matthews' work on learning communities had earned national recognition. Professor Lynch told a story demonstrating how a collaborative approach allowed students and teacher alike to appreciate the extraordinary diversity of background and culture at LaGuardia:

Students conducting research in Professor's Clara Wu's Bridges to the Future Program.

> One day, fumbling to illustrate some point I was making, I used a tired cliche: "as certain as death and taxes." Who's going to argue with that? Up shoots a hand. One of my students, a very articulate African-American young man, caught me short by saying he wasn't going to die. Say, what? I needed to get into this.
> "What do you mean you're not going to die?"
> "Just that. It says in the New Testament: 'There are those in this generation who will not see death...'
> He said these words as confidently as he might have said: "There are those in this generation who will collect Social Security."

The exchange led to a class discussion, which prompted another student to assert that she, too, believed she would not die. "This illustrates an important point," Professor Lynch wrote. "If I cannot assume a common ground with two of my students even on our mutual mortality, all of my assumptions about shared perspective can at best be asserted tentatively."

Such a realization re-emphasized the importance of LaGuardia's effort to implement a strong Affirmative Action plan under the leadership of Dean Shirley Saulsbury and to infuse all aspects of learning with cultural pluralism. Dr. Eleanor Q. Tignor, who arrived at LaGuardia in 1978, has been heavily involved in the college's efforts to instill pluralism and diversity throughout the curriculum, and chaired the college's task force on pluralism until 1997. "When each course proposal was evaluated, we analyzed it to see if it was pluralistic in content and approach," she said. "For example, people in the Computer Information Services area said, 'We can't teach different kinds of authors, so what can we do to instill pluralism?' And we said you can be more pluralistic in the classroom by realizing that students learn in different ways. Pluralism has to be built into the courses."

Members of the Counseling Department.

To further address students' needs in basic skills, LaGuardia also undertook aggressive efforts to begin reinforcement as soon

as possible. A program called Quick Start offered entering students programs ranging in length from one to six weeks in order to prepare them for college work. For the increasing number of students requiring special attention to English proficiency, the academic ESL program (under the direction of Paul Arcario and Jack Gantzer) began working with the Humanities Department to pair ESL programs with drama and computer classes. LaGuardia also began offering a six-week intensive program in ESL. The overriding concern was, and continues to be, to ensure that students in need of basic skills or ESL instruction are not locked out of college because of changes in University-wide policy.

President Bowen with Rector Roberto Santana Sanchez of Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo at the inauguration of the Dominican Republic's first community college.

With the help of a state grant, the college instituted its New Student House in 1992 for students in need of help in several areas of basic skills. The project built on the concept of the supercluster and built a program that brought together reading, writing, speech communication and counseling in a program that grew to serve as many as 160 students per semester. Once again, LaGuardia's grant writers succeeding in getting money to help fund the college's continued commitment to students in need of assistance.

Faculty members, including Samuel Amoako, Will Koolsbergen, Phyllis Van Slyck, Michael Horwitz, Brian Gallagher and Roberta Matthews, set out to bring into the mainstream new students in need of developmental work. At the time the New Student House was founded, 85 percent of incoming students were taking at least one developmental course, and the 35 percent were taking all four basic classes — reading, writing, mathematics and speech. As a multi-disciplinary learning community, it drew on the work of Dean Matthews, with all course worked linked together and students similarly linked to the same teachers in all their courses.

In the words of the founders of New Student House, the program "is an attempt to create a viable small community within the much larger community of the college." Each term it enrolls 75 students in three sections of 25 and then creates a program for each section, using such techniques as team-teaching. Counseling also is a key component of the program.

Through the program, students explore such themes as gender and identity, the social consequences of cultural oppression and prejudice, and personal and cultural identity. A sampling of the program's assignments and reading material indicates the scope of the instruction that takes place in New Student House. Students are required to read diverse selections from such writers as Jamaica Kincaid, James Baldwin and Mario Vargas Llosa, deliver speeches about their own lives and prepare papers in conjunction with films they have screened and analyzed for content as well as cultural biases. As a strategy in stimulating the intellect of at-risk students, New Student House has won praise from students and faculty alike.

First Lady Donna Hanover presents the "Cool School" award to International High School.

The Office for Freshman Programs was yet another example of LaGuardia reaching out to new generations and acclimating them quickly to

life on campus. The program has been administered under several different names since it was founded in 1989. The office administers a variety of programs, most of them funded by special grants through City University and the state, to help students from the moment they have been identified as needing help in basic skills. The help begins even before the students attend their first class at LaGuardia — they attend special summer programs before the fall semester. "We look at their prospective majors, look at the remediation they require, and select the skills that would have the most impact on that major and home in on them," said Meryl Sussman, who heads the office. "For example, for a computer science major, we'd develop mathematics skills. For a liberal arts major, we'd concentrate on language skills." The program, including books, is free, and it is expected to double in size as students in the College Discovery program are required to attend remediation in the summer, rather than during the regular school year. The summer program served 450 students in 1996.

A smaller version of the summer program, called Quick Start, runs during the winter break for students admitted for spring semester. Another program administered by the office is called First Step, an extensive orientation program for incoming students who have filed all the necessary paperwork for admission to the college. The program allows them to register for classes earlier than they might have. "We give them the red-carpet treatment," said Sussman, noting that the program is designed to encourage students to commit to LaGuardia at the earlier possible date.

Renewed hard times called on all departments, administrators and faculty members to be creative in the face of changed circumstances. To give new emphasis to the importance of transfer, the college, in an effort coordinated by Dr. Larry Rushing of the Social Science Department, worked out articulation agreements with Baruch College (in areas of public policy) and Queens College (in education), meaning that those colleges would automatically accept credits for classes taken at LaGuardia.

President Bowen at the inauguration of the E Building.

In the English and Mathematics Departments, linked so closely with basic skills, chairpersons and faculty responded quickly to new realities. "There's a great deal of emphasis on developing a variety of collaborative learning strategies for writing," said Dr. Sandra Hanson, chairperson of the English Department. "Now, a great deal more writing is done in the classroom as opposed to explained in the classroom and practiced outside. Writing classes have become workshops." The English Department also has been an important proving ground for cultural pluralism, leading to an expansion of the canon taught at the school. "The list now included an incredible array of writers," Professor Hanson noted. (Students witnessed pluralism in action in their English classes, taught by such diverse faculty as Professors Eleanor Q. Tignor, Terry Cole, John Silva and Zhang Yu.)

A renewed emphasis on writing has led to the growth of an initiative called Writing Across the Curriculum. Faculty members from every academic area have been encouraged to develop programs specific to their fields in which students will be given

opportunities to write. Faculty training began in the fall of 1995, and a full year was spent discussing and debating the ways in which writing could be incorporated throughout the college.

In the Mathematics Department, the most dramatic change has come in the form of a computer lab (named in honor of Professor Lenny Saremsky) that allows students to work in multimedia. According to Assad Thompson, a mathematics professor, "computers will revolutionize what we teach at the basic levels." To an extent that is unique to mathematics and the sciences, revolutionary change means a huge adjustment for faculty, too. "When I was going to high school, we were using a slide rule," Dr. Thompson said. "That shows how much things have changed in a short time. We tell students that many of them will be living 50 or 60 years from now, and the world is not going to be the same. But for some of us older folks, keeping up with things takes some doing."

The inauguration of the High School of Arts and Technology.

Apparently, though, the older folks are getting results. In the early 1990s, LaGuardia's mathematics team, under the leadership of Professor Andrew Berry, showed remarkable improvement in intercollegiate competitions, placing third in a state contest and finishing first in the first part of a two-part City University Math League contest.

The math faculty, with Dr. Jorge Perez serving as chair, has begun working on a reform of teaching methods, inspired by math reformers at Harvard University. In addition, individual faculty members are attempting to take some of the mystery out of math by making it, in the words of Professor Denise Carter, more relevant to the real world. "For example, in our algebra class, we want to have problems with more than one correct answer, to get students more interested in the procedure than the answer," she said. The emphasis in the classroom is on making students more active learners, to remind them that education is not something passive, something that is done to them. It is active and adventurous.

And, at a time when City University has been accused of not adhering to the rigorous standards of old, Professor Carter pointed out that students in her pre-calculus classes are expected to know the material from the prerequisites, even if, as is often the case with students who have hectic schedules, some time has passed between the prerequisite and the more-advanced class. "The onus is on the student to review the material from the prerequisite," she said. "They know that if they're rusty, there will be no review. The idea is to make them responsible for their education."

Mathematics faculty also are working with Clark Atlanta University to develop an assortment of computer systems, including a program that would serve as an electronic tutor for students and would allow them use of computer software to review their homework. Another feature of the system would allow students to be tested on-line. And Professor Kathirga Nathan of the Mathematics Department has been working on computer software that would simulate a classroom setting.

With a scientist at LaGuardia's helm (and a scientist, George Hamada, named as the college's provost), the Department of Natural and

Applied Science naturally gained in prestige and influence in the 1990s. LaGuardia's programs in nursing, physical and occupational therapy and human services continued to grow as the allied health field continued to produce jobs throughout the region. But the emphasis on science took on a decidedly futuristic look when LaGuardia linked forces with NASA's Goddard Institute for Space Studies, allowing students to conduct research as far a field as the upper regions of Jupiter's atmosphere. The program came about when President Bowen approached NASA and asked if the institute were affiliated with any community colleges. It wasn't, so LaGuardia's Dr. John Stevenson and Roy McLeod wrote a proposal in hopes of bringing NASA to Long Island City. It was accepted, and the program started in 1991. What is especially poignant about the program is its emphasis on reaching out to minority students with dreams not unlike those of LaGuardia's president.

Janet Lieberman and co-chair Julie Hungar with former student at LaGuardia/Vassar reunion in 1996.

Under President Bowen's tenure LaGuardia initiated another program for groups traditionally underrepresented in the sciences. The Bridges to the Future program, run under the leadership of Professor Clara Wu, places LaGuardia students in research labs, where they work as fellows. In some cases, the lab research is done on campus; in other cases, students work in medical and scientific facilities in the metropolitan area. The program matches up to three students with a faculty mentor. Bridges to the Future has won acclaim as one of LaGuardia's best new programs.

The college's strategy of dealing with a fast-changing world received a boost in 1995 when the U.S. Department of Education awarded the college a $140,000 grant to develop a program called, appropriately, "LaGuardia Goes Global." The grant, directed by Professors Dehlly Porras, David Schoenberg, and Gil Muller, allowed LaGuardia to begin developing liberal arts and business programs in international studies, with a particular focus on such regions as Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and Eastern Europe—the birthplaces of many of LaGuardia's students. The program captured the essence of LaGuardia's emphasis on diversity and economic development, for students from diverse backgrounds with international studies experience very likely would find their career paths enhanced in the emerging global marketplace.

The Family College inauguration.

LaGuardia took its slogan about going global quite literally. Through a partnership with the Universidad Autonoma de Santo Domingo, LaGuardia helped found the first community college in the Dominican Republic. The Centro de Carreras Technicas Superiores opened in 1994, and immediately was hailed as a catalyst for economic development. In a demonstration of LaGuardia's leadership in cooperative education, the new community college required its students to participate in two internships. In 1996, LaGuardia further formalized its partnership with UASD in a seven-point agreement that called for, among other things, an exchange program in the arts and the humanities.

Meanwhile, as with the fiscal crisis of the 1970s, LaGuardia continued its remarkable growth even as the University, and the city, entered a period of retrenchment. Once again, the college celebrated physical expansion even while budget-makers talked of contraction. On June 4, 1992, President Bowen and Carolyn Cabell, Dean of Institutional Advancement, were joined by Queens politicians including Borough President Claire Shulman, Assemblywoman Catherine Nolan and City Councilmember Walter McCaffrey for a ceremony to mark the opening of the E Building. And just as the mid-1970s provided good news amid the fiscal wreckage, the early 1990s provided further evidence that the nation's educators had their eyes on LaGuardia. On October 19, 1992, LaGuardia and Middle College High School were presented with an "A-Plus For Breaking the Mold" award from the federal Department of Education.

Audrey Harrigan Lamont was a professor in the Office Technology Department before taking over the college's COPE program.

By this time, though, Middle College was not the only joint venture with the Board of Education attracting attention to LaGuardia's campus. International High School, designed to serve the needs of those Bowen described as "the new kids on the block," had been founded in 1985 as a variation on the themes struck by Middle College. The immigration that had changed Queens in the 1970s had produced, by the mid-1980s, thousands of students with limited proficiency in English. Because of language difficulties, they, like their peers in Middle College, were judged to be at-risk of dropping out. International High School's emphasis on small class size, individual attention, reinforcement of native language skills and career education courses was designed to keep these vulnerable teenagers in school and, hopefully, get them onto a college-bound track.

By the early 1990s, it was clear that International, under the dynamic leadership of its principal, Eric Nadelstern, was replicating the success of its older cousin, Middle College. Average daily attendance was over 90 percent, and 85 percent of its 400-plus students received passing grades in all courses. The dropout rate was minuscule—less than 5 percent. At the same time, International's demographics suggested that the "new kids on the block" were going to be around for some time. If International were any sort of barometer, diversity was going to be a permanent fixture on LaGuardia's campus. In the early 1990s, International's student body hailed from more than 50 countries, and its students spoke 35 languages other than English.

President Bowen confers the Presidential Medal on Carl McCall, New York State Comptroller, at the 1996 Commencement.

In a scenario that would sound familiar to Middle College's administrators and faculty, journalists and educators soon took notice of International's achievements. The National Council of Teachers of English honored the school as a "Center of Excellence," while evaluators at City University recommended that International's approach to teaching English be replicated in other high schools around the city.

In many ways, International High School offered LaGuardia a glimpse into the college's future, giving added emphasis to the school's new emphasis on a multicultural education.

In the winter of 1995, LaGuardia reaffirmed its commitment to serving the city's

at-risk teenagers with the founding of a third alternative high school—the Robert F. Wagner Institute for Arts and Technology. Like Middle College and International, the Wagner Institute is a collaborative effort between the college and the Board of Education. The school offers a traditional curriculum but has added electives such as art, theater, journalism, creative writing and other art- and technology-related courses.

The college's work with high school students extended even beyond the boundaries of Long Island City. An extensive program of collaboration with local high schools brought LaGuardia into the classrooms of juniors and seniors throughout Queens. Two examples of LaGuardia's College Now and College Connections programs, administered by Dr. Arlene Kahn. In College Now, juniors and seniors in seven high schools in Queens take college-level courses in their own schools, and are instructed by high school teachers who meet LaGuardia's qualifications to be an adjunct. The classes are taught before or after the regular school day, and serve about 1,000 students a year.

College Connection is similar, except that the high school students actually attend classes at LaGuardia itself. Both programs are tuition-free. The college's determination to give students in their mid-teens a taste of college extends to a program called Upward Bound, a replication of LaGuardia's highly successful Exploring Transfer program. Upward Bound takes high school students from Newtown, Bryant and Aviation and transports them to Vassar College for five weeks every summer, immersing them in the college experience.

Presidents Raymond Bowen and Joseph Shenker at the college's 25th anniversary dinner dance in 1997.

The Exploring Transfer program itself continued to enjoy success into the 1990s, sending students to Cornell, Yale, Smith and other four-year institutions. The success of the program is no secret — colleges have contacted LaGuardia, asking to be invited to the college to conduct recruitment. "The program has been around long enough now to have a history, so we can go to four-year institutions and show them how well it works," said Dr. Cecilia Macheski, who taught in and directed the program. Administratively, the program has changed somewhat over the years. It is now housed at Vassar, and from a high of 60 students per summer, it now admits about 35. Recently the program was endowed with $500,000 in gifts from Vassar graduates.

Meanwhile, LaGuardia was taking steps to ensure that the college remained on the cutting edge of economic as well as cultural issues. On March 1, 1990, a new policy statement outlining the college's mission included a commitment to support "entrepreneurship opportunities in a variety of industries in New York" and to forge "collaborative relationships with business and labor, local development and community agencies, and governmental agencies."

As an outgrowth of President Bowen's mandate, the LaGuardia Urban Center for Economic Development (LUCED) became a critical part of the college's outreach. The Center was designed to develop and promote programs that would enhance economic development in Queens and throughout the area while addressing the changing needs

of the labor market. One of the first programs put in place after President Bowen's mandate was designed to help local business owners, especially women and minorities, obtain state funding for government projects. Modeled after a similar program President Bowen had put into place when he was at Shelby State, the program came about in conjunction with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the firm of Coopers and Lybrand.

The success of the program was on display during the college's 25th anniversary academic year, when LaGuardia inducted the first member of its Million Dollar Club. Percy Brice, president of Percon Computers in Lindenhurst, Long Island, attended the prep program's 32-hour course in the summer of 1991. Within a few years, he had won $1.7 million worth of government contracts. In the first five years of the program's existence, 700 business owners took advantage of it, and they went on to win $8 million worth of contracts. It was understandable, then, that when President Bowen spoke at the Million Dollar Club ceremonies, he said he was "confident that each year we will be adding more and more names to the club."

Associate Dean Yvette Urquhart presiding at the college's 25th anniversary dinner dance.

"Contract training, in a nutshell, is what the center is all about today," said Will Saunders, LUCED's director. "We're working on a proposal to create a manufacturers alliance with the Long Island City Business Development Corporation to set up training for local companies so that they can become more profitable."

LUCED also expanded into other areas of economic development during the 1990s. In 1993, the program received a grant to develop a program in quality management, and, after convening a conference in the fall of 1993, the program signed up 18 small to mid-sized companies eager to learn what LaGuardia could teach them about quality production. One such company began turning a profit for the first time after two years in the program. The success of the quality management program led, in 1994, to the foundation of the CUNY Quality Consortium consisting of 11 colleges and based at LaGuardia. The consortium, founded with a $25,000 grant from the state Department of Economic Development, set up a "one-stop" training network, allowing local businesses to call a single, central office to refer them to the services and training they seek.

Off-campus entrepreneurs were not the only beneficiaries of LaGuardia's commitment to economic development. The 1990s also saw the establishment of a student-run bookstore designed to give students a chance to run their own business and experience a taste of being on their own—a position many of them will face in the new economy where lifetime jobs have disappeared from corporate America.

The focus on business and economic development did not take away from LaGuardia's traditional concentration on human services and on reaching out to the underserved. The Family Institute, headed by Sandra Watson as part of the Division of Adult and Continuing Education, continued to develop its mission of working with displaced homemakers, pregnant teenagers, high school dropouts, the unemployed and non-English speakers. "We develop training programs for those populations, and we

have an entrepreneurship network and a family day-care network affiliated with us," Watson said. The Institute, supported with no tax-levy funds, has served 5,000 people since its founding in 1982.

Like the Family Institute, the Family College program exhibited LaGuardia's ability to reach out to adults looking for a chance to improve their prospects and those of their families. At a time when the federal government is ending its historic commitment to poor and out-of-work families, Family College serves a pressing need—it offers training, counseling and child care to parents, most of them women, on welfare. The program, directed by Jo Ann Oyenuga, has won recognition in the press as an "ambitious program that has made a direct impact on the lives of ... students. It attempts to be part of a solution to the question of how best to reform welfare." During a ceremony in September, 1996, marking the official opening of the program, a 40-year-old student named Claire Ericksson-May explained the program's vital role: "Because of Family College," she said, "we have hope in our hearts. We have a dream that some day we will not have to depend on others."

Dean of Administration Richard Elliott and Mrs. Elliott at LaGuardia's "Old Timers" reunion in 1997.

Similarly, LaGuardia initiated a degree-conferring program designed for parents on welfare. The College Opportunity to Prepare for Employment (COPE) program was founded in 1993, several years after Congress appropriated funds to pay for the training of parents, usually mothers, receiving federal Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). The government paid for carfare, lunch expenses and child care; in exchange, selected students enrolled in for-credit programs that would lead to jobs upon completion of a degree.

At LaGuardia, COPE was structured around the concept of learning communities. "We developed three houses, or learning communities," said Audrey Harrigan, the director of the COPE program. "They were in allied health, careers in business and human services." Within each community, students took an array of courses related to their area of study, and like other learning communities, counselors and tutors were available to students. The program's first class took in nearly 200 students, and has averaged about 70 to 80 students per semester ever since.

Provost George Hamada greets Susan Armiger at the "Old Timers" reunion.

Students participate in the plan after an evaluation and interview process. Since its inception, more than 200 students have gone on to fulltime jobs—in fields as diverse as physical therapy, dietetics, nursing and business in such places as Pfizer, Channel 13 and New York Hospital—or have continued their education in a four-year institution. The figure represents dozens of success stories. "When you hear what some of the students are going through in their personal lives—and it's everything from A to Z—you realize that it's mind-boggling that they even get through the day," Harrigan said. "I get peeved when I hear people talk about welfare recipients as lazy or shiftless—when you talk to these mothers, you wonder how they survive."

Burdened already, COPE students have become subject to even more stringent standards. Changes in government policy now require COPE students to complete their degrees in two years, rather than three, and have eliminated the probationary semester that had been built into the old system. In addition, COPE students will be required to work 20 hours a week in exchange for their welfare assistance under the city's Work Experience Program. Fortunately, the college has some 50 jobs available to students enrolled in WEP, but that still means about 350 students will be placed in jobs elsewhere. "There are many outside forces working against us," Harrigan said. To counter those forces, LaGuardia has been attempting to develop strategies to make sure it continues to attract students who might otherwise give up on the idea of college and advancement.

The college's Hall of Flags was opened during ceremonies in 1997.

Though the political atmosphere of the country and the city has changed radically since LaGuardia's founding, programs as diverse as COPE, Family College, LUCED, New Student House, the NASA initiative and many others clearly reflect the college's mission statement: to serve the underserved, to bring education to as many people as possible, and to build community and citizenship out of a diverse population. "With welfare under attack and tuition assistance under attack, there are signs that it could be a bumpy road in the next few years," said Raymond Schoenberg, director of the registrar's office. "We'll have to work hard to hold our own."

At the same time, LaGuardia continued to display its knack for responding quickly, and even anticipating, changes in society and culture. Months before President Clinton joined some of his predecessors and some of America's most distinguished leaders (including retired General Colin Powell, a CUNY graduate) in calling for a return to volunteerism, LaGuardia established its Center for Community Service Learning, headed by Paul Saladino. The program, placed under the wing of the Division of Cooperative Education, was designed to encourage students to participate in the civic life of their communities. LaGuardia students who participate in the program are placed in volunteer positions in four areas: public safety, the environment, human services and education.

At a time when many commentators are bemoaning the loss of the nation's sense of community and civic spirit, LaGuardia is trying to provide solutions, to address the needs of the students and the world in which they live, and to remain a force for innovation and creativity in higher education.

* * *

As LaGuardia marked the 25th anniversary of its founding, President Bowen, his staff and the college's faculty and students found occasion to look back at a remarkable history. From an old factory building and a student population just over 500, LaGuardia had become a sprawling institution. Occupying all or part of four buildings,

a home to 37,000 students (counting the 11,000 full-time matriculated students as well as part-timers and continuing education students), it was a vital part of the neighborhood as well as the intellectual life of the city. In its 25th anniversary year, it was ranked third in the nation in the number of associate's degrees awarded to minority students. The diversity of the college was astonishing: a portion of the Main Building's walkway was transformed into an International Hall of Flags, featuring the banners of the 133 nations that are the birthplaces of LaGuardia's students, staff and faculty.

As some of the college's founders gathered to recall the early days, the prevailing sentiment was not one of self-congratulation but of bewilderment: Had 25 years really passed so quickly?

Was there a better indicator that the school remained as vital and energetic as ever?

At Opening Sessions in September, 1996, 25 members of the college family were recognized for their quarter-century of service. They were: Ngozi Agbim (Chief Librarian), Cleveland DaCosta (Social Science), George Hamada (Provost), John Holland (Communication Skills), Ann Trzcinski (Mathematics), Carolyn Mena (Computer Services), Bill Pan (Planning and Design), Ray Schoenberg (Registrar), Herman Washington (Computer Information Systems), John Bihn (Natural and Applied Sciences), Don Davidson (Computer Information Systems), Debby Harrell (Office Technology), Maxine Lance (College Discovery), Gil Muller (English), Max Rodriguez (Humanities), Charles Stolze (Mathematics), John Weigel, (Cooperative Education), Steve Brauch (Continuing Education), Dorrie Williams (Cooperative Education) Harry Heinemann (Cooperative Education), Jeff Kleinberg (Social Science), Roy McLeod (Institutional Advancement), Eileen Murray (Administrative and Support Services), Nancy Santangelo (Admissions) and John Hyland (Social Science).

The presence of so many founding faculty and staff came as a revelation to one of the college's founding students, Peter Maturro, who returned to the campus for the commemoration. "It was amazing to see so many people who have been there since the beginning," he said. "I guess that tells you something about LaGuardia. It's a place you never want to leave."

In their memories of lessons taught and learned, of transforming experiences and personal enrichment, thousands of students and hundreds of faculty and staff never have.

President Bowen congratulates Provost Hamada on 25 years of service to the college.

CHAPTER SIX

The Road Ahead

In the fall of 1996, as the college celebrated its tradition of innovation, work crews assembled on Queens Boulevard and brought the next century to LaGuardia's doorstep. A long-awaited fiber optic cable was placed under the road's surface, and a piece of it was routed to the college's campus. LaGuardia became the first college in Queens to link up to a fiber-optic network.

The connection represented two aspects of the LaGuardia success story. The administration was quick to grasp the network's potential for growth, outreach and service in the new world of telecommunications. And, in order to turn a vision into reality, LaGuardia worked behind the scenes to make sure that all the right connections were made. Under the leadership of John Kotowski, the college's director of Legislative and Community Affairs, the college worked with Borough President Clar[illegible] Shulman's office and various other governmental agencies in a successful effort to bring the technolgy on campus.

"There is no limit to the services that we can provide to the citizens of Queens," President Bowen announced. Provost George Hamada pointed out that the new technology meant that LaGuardia's message and mission could be taken to even more underserved households and neighborhoods. By working with the city's Crosswalks public-affairs television channels, LaGuardia will be able to reach out to more high schools and other colleges and government agencies. Through fiber optics, classroom lectures could be brought to community centers and

even living rooms. Businesses could tap into LaGuardia's vast bank of knowledge and training facilities. Senior citizens could participate in continuing education programs without having to travel to Long Island City.

The fiber-optic connection is just one of the ways in which LaGuardia has positioned itself for continued growth and innovation in the new century. The college has been authorized to purchase the Center III Building at 29-10 Thomson Avenue, in which it currently leases three stories and part of the basement. In addition, the college plans to acquire what is now a two-story parking garage and parking lot on Skillman Avenue and a vacant parcel on 30th Street, just south of Center 3. The college plans to build a mixed-use facility, to be called Center IV, on the parking lot site. The new building would house a track and field house and a student center.

Author William Julius Wilson addressed the college community during a lecture that was part of the 25th anniversary celebration.

The acquisitions would create a mini-campus to the west of the Main Building. Center III would be home to the English, Humanities, Office Technology, ESL and Social Sciences Departments, as well as Cooperative Education, International High School, Family College and other administrative offices. Meanwhile, the Main Building itself would be renovated to include a Student Events Hall. The library, too, is scheduled for an overhaul that will double its present size of 35,000 square feet. LaGuardia has come a long way since the day President Joseph Shenker promised that there would be no physical expansion beyond the college's original building.

It is fair to ask of any institution celebrating its 25th anniversary whether the enthusiasm and energy of the early years has waned, whether those charged with keeping the tradition alive are now content to rest on well-deserved laurels. Those questions, however, are answered effectively by the actions of faculty members, staff and administrators, so many of whom have spent the better part, if not the whole part, of their careers at LaGuardia. Such questions are answered by the words of one of LaGuardia's founding faculty members, David Wertheimer.

"When I started, I was a young man," he said. "Now, I'm a grandfather. I'm 67 years old. But I want to keep doing this for as long as I'm able. The students inspire me, keep me young. When I drive into work in the morning, I'm happy. I can't wait for the day to start."

Eleanor Q. Tignor knows the feeling. After 20 years of commuting from her home in New Haven, Connecticut to Long Island City, she continues to make the journey with as much enthusiasm as ever. "I like to talk to students about their hopes and dreams," she said. But she also warns her students about the future. "You have to remember," she tells them, "that not every place you go to is going to be like LaGuardia."

They were given a similar reminder during the college's 25th Anniversary commemoration when Harvard University scholar William Julius Wilson addressed students, faculty and staff on the disappearance of work in the inner city. Author of the

book, *When Work Disappears*, Wilson spoke of the world of the urban poor and the limited prospects many poor people in America's cities face.

It is a world, of course, that many of LaGuardia's students know intimately, and it is a world so many of them hope to escape—through hard work, perseverance and knowledge. It is for them that City University and LaGuardia Community College exist in the first place. And it is for them that LaGuardia's faculty, staff and administration continue to develop new programs, new courses, new strategies for learning.

* * *

By the year 2004, LaGuardia's student headcount is projected to reach nearly 13,000. Very few of those 21st Century students will resemble LaGuardia's original student population. They will have grown up in a world vastly changed from September, 1971.

Their aspirations and their dreams, however, will be no different than the Class of 1973. They will be, as Timothy Healy said of the students of the 1970s, the original American revolutionaries—bold in their ambition and eager to claim their piece of a dream.

They will be different, and they will be the same. Likewise, LaGuardia Community College.

LAGUARDIA
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LaGuardia Community College Administration

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Office Technology

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The Cover:
The theme line, "LaGuardia Works," and the sculpted pencil were combined in college promotional materials introduced in the mid-1980s. The image was used on posters as part of a city-wide subway advertising campaign.

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